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THIRTY-ONE SERMONS

PREACHED

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

(UL)

BY

HENRY HAMMOND, D.D.,

ARCHDEACON OF CHICHESTER, AND CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH.

"How shall they hear, without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" *Rom.* x. 14, 15.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." *St. Mark* xvi. 15.

V. 3, PART I.

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JOHN HENRY PARKER;

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THE

CHRISTIAN'S OBLIGATIONS

TO

PEACE AND CHARITY.

DELIVERED

IN AN ADVENT SERMON AT CARISBROOK CASTLE,
Ann. 1647.

AND

NOW PUBLISHED WITH NINE SERMONS MORE.

BY

HENRY HAMMOND, D.D.

470747

FOR HIS MOST SACRED MAJESTY.

The sermon of peace and charity which your majesty was pleased to call for about twelve weeks since, by which means it had the favour to become one of the earliest addresses made to your majesty after the recalling of those votes[a], hath now taken the confidence to appear more public, that it may demonstrate and testify the reality of your majesty's inclinations to peace, (which alone could render this trifle considerable to you), and the sincere desire of your most private undisguised retirements, to make the way back to

[a] [Both houses of parliament had resolved (Jan. 3 and 15) that they would receive no more messages from the king, and that they would send no address to him for the future, and that if any other person should do so he should be considered guilty of high treason. This vote of non-addresses was repealed August 3. The king probably sent for the sermon about the end of June, 1648, if we may judge from the expression "twelve weeks since," compared with the date of the dedication, Sept. 16. Why it was not sent earlier than August 3, it is not easy to say, but perhaps Hammond, who was at that time under confinement, had not access to his papers. The sermon itself was preached on St. Andrew's day, 1647, "the third of Advent," but was probably intended for the previous Sunday, the text being taken from the first lesson for evening service. The last of these ten sermons was prepared probably for the morning service of the same day, and perhaps Hammond did not arrive at Carisbrook in time to preach them. Hammond had been removed from his attendance on the king Dec. 27 of the previous year, and upon his expulsion from his canonry in March, 1648, was with Sheldon kept in close confinement, in Oxford, though most of the other expelled members of the University had been banished from Oxford. The reason of this no doubt was to prevent their having access to the king, over whom it was feared that they might exert too much influence. Their imprisonment was afterwards assigned as a reason why their attendance could not be granted to his majesty at the treaty of Newport, Charles having requested their attendance in a letter dated August 28. It is to the refusal of the House of Commons that he alludes in the concluding sentence of the dedication.]

your throne by none but pacific means, even then when others thought it their duty by the sword to attempt it for you.

The other few sermons added to the volume have no errand but to attend this, that it may with a little more solemnity approach your sacred presence, and enjoy that liberty which is denied to

Your majesty's most obedient,

and most devoted subject and servant,

H. HAMMOND.

Sept. 16, 1648.

SERMON I.

THE CHRISTIAN'S OBLIGATIONS TO PEACE AND CHARITY.

Isaiah ii. 4.

They shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks.

The day is the third of Advent, designed by the Church for the celebration of the closer and nearer approach of the Majesty of heaven to this lowly sinful earth of ours, that εὐλογημένη ἐρχομένη βασιλεία, "blessed coming kingdom," as it is styled, Mark xi. 10. And the text is a piece of an Advent chapter, the very contents bespeak it so, Isaiah prophesying the coming, i. e. Advent of Christ's kingdom. All the unhappiness of it is, that this part of the prophecy about transforming of swords seems not yet to be fulfilled in our ears, that after so many centuries, Christ is not yet so effectually and throughly born amongst us, as was here foretold, that those glorious effects of His incarnation are not yet come to their full date, i. e. in effect, that Christ is come to His birth, and with Him all the well-natured charitable qualities, all the unity and peace and bliss in the world, and through the contrivances of the enemy-power, there is not liberty or "strength to bring forth," all the precious issues of Christianity are resisted and obstructed and stifled in the womb, [Isa. xxxvi.] the temper of the pretending world being so strangely distant from the temper of Christ, the prophecies of His coming having so little of the sword in them, and the practice of Christendom so nothing else. Blessed Lord, that we might once be able to reconcile these contrary φαινόμενα, that we might one day celebrate an Advent indeed, and that the completion of the prophecy of this text might be an ingredient

SERM. I. in the solemnity, that this of ours might be one of those nations and people judged and rebuked, i. e. convinced and converted by the incarnate Saviour, for then would these [Isa. ii. 4.] words of the text be verified of us, "They shall beat their swords," &c.

The words are the character or effect of Christ's kingdom, of the state and power of His gospel in men's hearts; and I shall view them, first, absolutely, in the several parts or branches of this character: and then relatively, as they are peculiarly verified of the state of the gospel, or as they are a character of that.

In the absolute view you have, 1. The swords and spears on one side. 2. The plough-shares and pruning-hooks on the other. 3. The passage or motion of one of these into the other, by way of beating.

In the relative view we shall, 1. have occasion to vindicate the truth of this prophecy against the contrary appearances. 2. To shew you how, and by what means Christianity undertakes to work this great work, to beat the swords, &c.

I begin with the absolute view, and in that, with the most formidable part of the prospect, the swords and spears. Sharp assaulting piercing weapons found out and forged by the passions and wits of men, to arm their rage, to satisfy their covetings and ambitions, to manage all the quarrels that the carnal or diabolical affections of men have commenced or inflamed through the world. These are the gross elements made use of by the prophet figuratively to express the instruments of our hostilities that lie more covertly in our hearts, these invisible swords and spears, animosities, uncharitable, unpeaceable humours, that Christ came to allay and temper, to transform and beat into other shapes. And to put off the figure, and give you plain words instead of it; three sorts there are of these quarrels or hostilities, which seem all to be comprehended in these words.

1. Though more improperly, our hostilities against God, our rebellions and resistances against His will, our contrary walkings to Him, the throwing off that yoke of moral or Ps. ii. [3.] Christian duties, "breaking those bands, casting off those cords," and that either, 1. In an universal dislike of His [Luke xix. 14.] government, a direct *nolumus hunc*, that professed atheism

that begins to set up to gather disciples and proselytes abroad in the world, that chair of the scorner, that disclaims religion as a pusillanimous thing, a ridiculous pedantic quality, that hath in their opinion dispirited and emasculated the world: or else, 2. By particular oppositions to His commands in the retail, sinning over all the precepts on either mount, taking part with the law of the members, against all the empires of the law of the mind, and under a Christian profession doing as much despite unto Christ as he that hath shut Him out of his mouth, and brain also; and in relation to these hostilities it is, that we ministers are posted from heaven like so many heralds at the news of a battery, or approach of the enemy, to demand a parley, before men proceed any further in their giantly *θεομαχία*, or fighting against God, and our embassy is very submiss, as though God did beseech you by us, as Lot doth the Sodomites on their assault of the angels, "We pray you brethren, do not so wickedly," [Gen. xix. 7.] we pray you in Christ's stead that you will not proceed in your course, that you will be pacified and reconciled unto God; and sure these are formidable slaughtering weapons, very bloody threatening enemies, that make God think fit to send out embassies for treaty, and not venture His heaven to be stormed by them. [2 Cor. v. 20.]

A second sort of hostilities possibly here meant are these against ourselves, the fatalest and bloodiest in the world, the piercing and wounding, and butchering our own poor souls, deforming and enfeebling them with our wasting habits of sin, exhausting the very principles of civil ingenuous nature, leaving never a vital spark or seed of humanity behind, but violating and grieving and quenching all, a direct *felonia de se*, murdering and assassinating these divine creatures which God had prepared to people heaven, and casting them out to the noisomest dunghills, employing them to the meanest offices in the world. Nay hostilities to the flesh itself; those sins that undertake to serve the grosser part of us, to have special fidelities and kindnesses to the flesh in all their warrings against the soul, are not yet so faithful in their performances, work oft the greatest malices to that very flesh, cast it sometimes into the fire, sometimes into the water, [Mark ix. 22.] despoil it of all the honour, beauty, spirits, joys, and life

SERM. I.

itself, leave it the piteousest, disfigured, rifled, wasted flesh imaginable, and so have their malices and treacheries against that also. But the truth is, these are but the *προπύγμαι*, or *σκιαμαχίαι*, the prelusory lighter brandishings of these swords: the uncharitablenesses here especially designed are in the third place, those that (as our material swords and spears) are ordinarily employed against our brethren, or fellow Christians, either upon their lives, or their reputations, or their souls.

1. On their lives, when either our ambitions, or revenges, or which is the worst of all, and the bloodiest assassinate (when it is set on it, when it is gotten into the Jesuit chamber of meditation) our *πικρὸς ζῆλος*, bitter envying or zeal, when that I say, like the blood of the mulberries to the elephant, shall inflame us to a brutality, a thirst of our brethren's blood, turning the Christian into a Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord; giving the Church that new notion of militant in shedding as much of other men's blood (and triumphing in that effusion) as in the primitive times it poured out of its own veins, when the heathen persecutors called for it; when Christians shall design God sacrifices, bloody cannibal oblations, and, in that other stern sense of the Apostle's words, *λογικὰς θυσίας*, "rational human sacrifices," whole herds and hecatombs at once, and think to avert judgments, to work expiations, to perform supererogating services to God by that means.

[Jas. iii. 14.]

[Gen. x. 9.]

[Rom. xii. 1.]

2. On their reputations, whether in the language of the slanderer and reviler, "whose words are spears and arrows, and his tongue a sharp sword," in the Psalmist's dialect, the preparative to that former practising on the life, putting men into wild beasts' skins, that they may be worried, and torn to pieces in their disguises; or whether yet in the higher strain of the censorious anathematizer, that breathes out woes and damnations, passes that bloody sentence upon all that walk not in his path toward Canaan; this spiritual assassinacy, this deepest dye of blood being most satanically designed on souls, and (because they cannot get those into their power) practising it in effigy, slaughtering them here in this the other Calvary, the place for the crucifying of reputations, turning men (upon any, upon no occasion) out of

[Ps. lvii. 4.]

the communion of their charity, when they cannot out of bliss, and no doubt rejecting many whom the angels entertain more hospitably.

Lastly, on men's souls, whether by terrors or by invitations, by the sharp or by the soft weapon, working ruin and destruction on them: by the sharp, forcing to violate their consciences in hope to get their bodies or estates off from the torture,—as the Englishman is observed through impatience of any present pressure, to venture the vastest future danger that will pretend to ease or rescue him at the instant, and therefore they say the use of the rack was superseded in this nation,—and they that can be instruments in this savage enterprise, that can thus operate under the great Abaddon, in this profession of assaulting and wounding of souls, for which Christ was content to die, are sure some of the בני דמים "the sons of bloods," in the plural, as the Hebrews call them; and so he also that is so skilled at the soft weapon, that by the fair insinuating carriage, by the help of the winning address, the siren mode or mien can inspire poison, whisper in destruction to the soul,—as the poetic present that had secret chains in it, fettering and enslaving of him that was pleased with it, ἥσθη τῷ δώρῳ καὶ ἐδέθη, καὶ ὁ λύσων οὐκ ἦν, in the orator, the delight brought shackles, the beauty bands along with it, but no man to loose him that was presently ensnared by them,—he that can tole[a] on the tame, well-natured, easily seducible into all the luxury, and the hell, the sin and the damnation imaginable, he is one of the fair-spoken swordmen, that David speaks of, "whose words are softer than butter, and yet are they very swords." [Ps. lv. 21.] You have had a view of the artillery in the text, the interpretation of the hostile weapons, "the swords and spears," the furniture of the heathen's armoury before Christ's coming, (good God, that in their travel round about the world, they were not at length all transported hither, and like the teeth of old, sowed and sprung up a whole harvest of swords and spears, of animosities, and uncharitablenesses in this our land!) I hasten to the more innocent tools, the weapons of the husbandman's

[a] [Johnson says of this word that it seems to be some barbarous provincial word meaning to train, to draw by degrees. It is used by Locke and Fletcher and others.]

SERM. I.

warfare against his enemies, barrenness and unprofitableness, the "plough-shares and the pruning-hooks" on the other side, my second particular. The signification of these emblems or hieroglyphics you will soon discern, when you but consider them, first, in the general notion, wherein both of them agree, instruments of husbandry; and then in their several particular proprieties. In the first, they both accord to express unto us the spiritual industry and skill, the office and the craft of dressing and cultivating of souls: we are God's husbandry, His beloved plantation, entrusted ministerially under Him to our own, to our brethren's diligence.

1. Every man to take the care of his own field, his own soul, to help it to all the dressing and improving, to water it with his tears, when it is a dry soil, drain it with action and business, yea, and mix it with new mould, affiance and comfort in Christ when it is too moist, (the dissolving or weeping earth,) and when it is too beggarly and lean, to enrich it with all the whole mine of fatness that lies treasured to that purpose in the Word of God, to ply it through each season from the seed-time of repentance (that sowing in tears), to the harvest in joy and cheerfulness, the bringing our sheaves with us, these worthy meet-fruits of that repentance; this earth of ours, I say, is thus to practise upon itself, or when it can do nothing else (the driest parched unregenerate soul) yet still, with that, to cleave, and open, and gasp toward heaven, to be ready to receive and suck in those showers, those influences which that is ready to afford us, and after all the planting and watering, to acknowledge all to be God's *καρποφορία*, His fructifying or giving of increase. And not only thus every man to be his own husbandman under God, but,

[Ps. cxxvi. 6.]

[1 Cor. iii. 6.]

2. Every man again to help in his brother's field, to make his art and trade of husbandry as communicative and gainful as he can, not as the manner is of the covetous worldling, to enclose his skills for fear any man else should be as prosperous as he, but to diffuse our charity, and not only, as the ancients did, write books of husbandry (our spiritual georgics and geoponics), but go bodily and labour in the vineyards by our aid, and by our example encourage all the neighbourhood into this trade of thriving, set to that glo-

rious work of civilizing deserts, banishing briers and thorns (to which the lapsed Adam was condemned) quite out of the country, weed out all the ferity and barbarity out of men's minds, bring the whole region from the neglected waste to the trim fruitful inclosure, from the wilderness to the garden, and as far as it is possible towards some degree of return towards Eden, towards paradise again, I mean towards the innocence and fertility of that: and if ever there was a time when the province was large (I would I could say the harvest great) and need to pray to the Lord God of the harvest to send a whole army of labourers, not with their military, but their husbandly instruments for the ἔργα φιλανθρωπίας, οὐ στρατηγίας, the grand charitable act, which Cyrus in Xenophon[b] preferred before the military, to dress a wild people, and plant some seeds (of Christianity shall I say? nay) of honest civil nature amongst Christians, to make men ingenuous heathens, one pitch above savage or cannibal, to give a little Europe breed instead of a whole Afric of wilder creatures, and so in some measure to take away Christ's reproach, which the most unchristian lives of the generality of Christians have cast upon Him, this certainly were a season for such prayers in Christendom, and all the plough-shares and pruning-hooks in a country would be little enough for that purpose.

[Matt. ix. 37, 38; Luke x. 2.]

But then somewhat is here noted by the particular proprieties of the plough-shares and the pruning-hooks: the plough-shares, they are for the breaking up our fallow grounds, wounding and tearing asunder our firm fast hardened habits of sins, that quarry of earth and stone, with the fair green even surface over it, fetching up the root of the weeds and thorns, our corrupt customs of atheism and profaneness, that grew so voluntarily and so fast, nay, the very green sward, as we call it, the more innocent, blameless face of unregenerate morality, which though it have no great hurt in it, yet must give place to this seed of Christ, furrowing and turning it up all, that there may be the bare earth, as it were, the *solum subactum*, the broken humble contrite heart ready for this new sower, for the infusions of grace, which will never thrive if there be any thing left to

[Jer. iv. 3; Hos. x. 12.]

[b] [Xen. Cyr. viii. 4. 7.]

SERM. I.

encumber or resist, to overtop or wrestle with it: and so you have the interpretation of plough-shares here, the rending of the impenitent heart, the preparing it for grace, the humbling the proud sinner; and fitting, and softening, and emptying him for Christ.

Then for the pruning-hooks, if that be the exact rendering of the Hebrew, you have then under that colour the dressing of God's plantations, the supervenient work of pairing and cutting all excrescences, in the regenerate child of heaven, —parallel to the washing of His feet, which were cleansed already, in Christ's answer to St. Peter,—lopping off the suckers, the luxuriances, that will still return, as long as we have that root and fomes of flesh about us, and if they are suffered to grow too lavishly, will soon suck away all the vital fructifying juice from the branches, at least exhaust very much of that heavenly store, which would be husbanded at the best advantage, every dram more preciously employed.

[John xiii. 10.]

But if our margin have made the better conjecture, as many times it doth, and the scythes, which you meet with there, carry away the importance of the original from the pruning-hooks, you have then God's calling for His fruits in the time of harvest, sending His mowers into the field, His strict requiring and earnest expecting the plentiful issues of all His care, the growths and fructifyings of His graces; and then put all these together,—as indeed the various readings may both stand good, or the hook or sickle, which may probably be the yet fitter rendering of the word, will supply the place both of text and margin, be accommodable to either, to both uses,—and then you have here the entire positive business of all Christianity, sometimes to break up, sometimes to prune, sometimes to prepare the fruits for God's barn, to begin, to advance, to perfect that great work of fruit-bearing, that only design of all God's methods and dispensations amongst us, the kindly vintage which He expects so passionately after all His husbandry. And, O what an exprobration will it be to us, the *ecce labruscas* there, our nothing but wild grapes, our sour unsavoury fruits of unrighteousness after all this dressing! And let that serve for the second particular of the absolute view, there is only the third behind, the motion or passage from one of these to the

[Matt. xiii. 30; xxi. 34.]

[Isa. v. 2—6.]

other, from the swords to the plough-shares, from the spears to the sickles or hooks, and that by way of beating; "they shall beat," &c.

The same individual metal, which was even now a sword, having suffered some change in the fire and anvil, comes out new forged in the other shape; the same affections that were even now maliciously acted by Satan, formed and whet at the Philistine's forge, *ὅπλα ἀδικίας*, weapons of all the villainy in the world, the disquieters of the honour and peace of Christendom, the only *boutefeux*[c] abroad, our passions and appetites, let them be but transformed by the spirit of Christ, let the fire and hammer pass on them, and without being destroyed in that fire, they come out new moulded, instruments of righteousness, zeal for the reforming our own lives, emulation for purity, and for fructifying; that Saul that was even now an Apostle or messenger of the Jewish consistory to Damascus, and had then such a heart full of swords and spears, was so furious a blasphemer of Christ, and persecutor of Christians, may continue his metal still, his title and almost his name and office, and be the gallanter Apostle of Christ, the more abundant labourer for ever after. Christianity doth not mean such enmity to nature, such scorn and contumely to our human souls, as to throw all away as dross and refuse, to mortify any other members upon earth, but those which signify our sins, "fornication, uncleanness, envyings, seditions," &c. As for the affections or faculties themselves, have they been never so profane and unhallowed, a breathing on them, or a consecrating them anew, a putting them to purer and more honourable uses for the future, will serve the turn; the censers of Corah, with a little change, will become excellent plates for God's sanctuary. Let that love that even now was transported and lavished out on the sensual object, "be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire," come out a pure ethereal love, fastened on "the beauty of holiness,"—that angelical purity to be transcribed into thine and thy brethren's hearts,—and the more flaming this love is, the more gracious and more acceptable it is like to be. Let but the hostility that is now let loose

[Rom. vi. 13.]

[Acts ix. 2.]

[Col. iii. 5.]

[Numb. xvi. 39.]

[Matt. iii. 11.]

[1 Chron. xvi. 29.]

[c] [Johnson says this word means an incendiary; one who kindles feuds and discontents. It is used in the works of King Charles.]

SERM. I.

upon the persons, the sins, the personal affronts, nay, perhaps the graces and virtues of other men, be retrenched and retired, and reflected on our own sins, and then let there be as much steel in the weapons, as much zeal in the revenges and indignations as ever; may but the ambitions and aspirings of the worldling—that, like air, pent up in too close a coop, works such σεισμοὺς and tempests, such shaking palsy fits in the regions about us,—be fastened according to St. Paul's advice on a new object, transformed into the διώκετε [τὴν] ἀγάπην, "pursuing of charity," as of a prize in the Olympic games, into the φιλοτιμεῖσθε ἡσυχάζειν, taking as much pains, striving as emulously to contain himself and others in quiet, to restore a battered kingdom to peace again, as contentious men use to put the world into a combustion, and then our swords may become very edifying weapons, our contentions very excellent, profitable contentions, every man striving to surpass and exceed the other in meekness, patience, contented taking up the cross of Christ,—those more than Olympic ἀγῶνες, to which the incorruptible crown is assigned,—overcoming men in charity and well doing. Do but you enter into the school of Christ,—the most boisterous raw uncultivated you, that have least of this sacred temper about you,—and that will be able to infuse it: which brings me to my second general, the relative aspect of these words, as they are a character of the gospel state of the kingdom of Christ, and so the fitter for an Advent sermon. And in that we are, 1. to consider what truth there is in that prediction to justify and vindicate this prophecy against all the contrary appearances, "they shall beat," &c. One objection it is clear there is against the truth of this prophecy, and it were more for the credit of Christendom that there were an hundred others so this might be superseded, the contrary practice of the generality of Christians. Blessed Lord! where is this promise of Christ's coming, this consequent of His birth and kingdom among men? for since swords came once into the world, since the sweet of revenge and the advantage of spoiling others was once tasted, since that bloody issue once began to break out, what hath all our Christianity done to stop or staunch it? It is true, what historians tell us, that at the time of Christ's birth there was a

[1 Cor. xiv. 1.]

[1 Thess. iv. 11.]

[2 Pet. iii. 4.]

notable cessation of arms over the whole world, and the ἀπογραφή, not taxing but enrolling that brought Christ's parents up to Bethlehem, and so occasioned His birth there, was an effect and immediate product of that cessation, and it was a remarkable act of providence, that upon a former peace and so command for that enrolling, in the same Augustus' time, proclaimed at Tarracone in Spain, as Sepulveda tells us,—which if it had succeeded Christ in any likelihood had not been born in Bethlehem,—there brake out some new broils that deferred the peace and enrolling till this very point of time, when Christ was carried up in Mary's womb to obey the prediction of His birth in Bethlehem. But sure all this would be but a very imperfect completion of this other prophecy in my text; this peace was soon at an end, and besides, was rather the midwife to bring Christ into the world, than Christ to bring this peace. And yet to see how some observers have been willing to pitch upon this one passage of story, the shutting of Janus' temple about the birth of Christ,—the catholic peace in that part of the world at that point of time,—as the main thing that was pointed at in this verse. SERM. I. Luke ii. 1.

Their reason is clear, because as for a long time before, so since that time there was never any such completion of it; Christ born in an halcyon hour, had scarce ever any one afterwards whilst He lived: and for His posterity He makes the profession, "He came not to bring peace, but a sword," that is, He foresaw this would be the effect of His coming; Christianity would breed new quarrels in the world, some men really hating one another upon that score of difference in religion,—and they say no feuds are more desperately implacable, no swords more insatiably thirsty of blood than those which Christ brought into the world,—but most men making this the πρόφασις, the pretence and excuse of all their bloodiness. It was Du Plessis' account to Languet, why he had not a mind to write the story of the civil wars of France, because if he had said truth, he must render new originals and causes of these wars, hound that fox to a kennel which would not willingly be acknowledged, charge that on an emulation or rivality of state, which (like the harlot, that coming fresh from her unclean embraces, had wiped the mouth) came demurely and solemnly, and superciliously out of the Church, the only [Matt. x. 34.]

SERM. I.

sanctuary to give impunity and reputation, apology at least, to the blackest enterprises; and between the *πρόφασις* and the *αἰτία*, the true and the pretended causalities, the effect, God knows, is generally too sad. Mahomet that professed to propagate his religion by the sword hath not brought such store of these bloody weapons, so rich a full-stocked artillery into the world, hath not kept them so constantly employed, so sharp set, so riotous in their thirsts of blood, as hath been observable in Christendom. I am sure that Cæsarean section, practising upon our own mothers, our own bowels, fellow Christians, fellow Protestants, fellow professors,—shall I add fellow saints? but sure sanctity, if it were sincere, would turn these swords into plough-shares,—was never so familiar among Turks, or savages; nay, as Erasmus hath sweetly observed, among the wildest beasts in nature,—which are not beast enough to devour those of their own kind,—as it is amongst Christians of this last age almost in every part of the world. Only the bladder of snakes in Epiphanius hath been our parallel, they were there but few hours together but one of them had devoured all the rest, and when—to try the experiment how solitude and want of prey would discipline the devourer's appetite—he was shut up alone in the bladder, his vulturous stomach lets loose upon himself, and within few minutes more one half of him devours the other; so many divided and subdivided enmities, and when all others are wanting such bloody practisings upon ourselves, that if it be true which Psellus saith, that the devils feast on the vapour that is exhaled from the blood of men, sure the Christian devils, and of late the English, are the fattest of the whole herd, the richliest treated of any, since whole tables were furnished for them of the blood and flesh of their worshippers. And thus far I confess myself unable to vindicate this prophecy in this sense of it, that so it should actually prove that Christianity would really drive swords out of the world; I should be glad to be secured by the millenary, that ever there would come an age when this prophecy would thus be completed, but more glad if this nation might have the happiness within some tolerable term to enter upon its millennium, that the *Pacem Domine in diebus nostris*, "Peace in our time, our age, O Lord," were not such a desperate *non*

licet form, and that for "deliverance from battle and murder," as scandalous a piece of litany, as that other "from sudden death" hath been deemed among us. SERM. I.

I have sufficiently shewed you in what sense these words have no truth in them; it is time I proceed to shew you in what sense they have: and that will be either,

1. By telling you that this prophetic form is but a phrase to express the duty and obligation of Christians; "they shall beat their swords into plough-shares," i. e. it is most certainly their duty to do so. Charity is the only precept, peace the only *depositum*, that Christ took any care to leave among them; and then, be there never so many swords in Christian nations, yet it were more obediently and more christianly done, if they were beaten into plough-shares: there is a thousand times more need of amending men's lives, than of taking them away, of reforming ourselves, than of hating or killing our brethren; one broken heart is a richer and more acceptable sacrifice to God, than a whole pile of such bloody offerings, such Mosaical consecrating ourselves to God upon our brethren; and then, as Clemens[d] speaks of seals or rings, that those that have the impressions and sculptures (as of idols, so) of bow, or sword, must not be worn by the disciple of Christ, the pacific Christian; or as the Polonian, being asked concerning two brethren that desired to be of his congregation,—as being of a trade which was suspected to be unlawful, the making of images or faces to put upon guns, or ordnances,—gave answer, that he knew no great danger in those images; if there were any thing unchristian, it was sure in the guns, which they were used to adorn: so certainly that Christ that came to cast idolatry and heathenism out of the world, desired also to cast out that heathenish custom of wallowing in one another's blood, of hunting, and worrying, and devouring one another, and with the Christian faith to introduce the brotherly charity into His Church, this being the most strict, and most frequently reiterated command of

[d] [αἱ δὲ σφραγῖδες ἡμῖν ἔστων πελειὰς, ἢ ἰχθὺς, ἢ ναῦς οὐρανοδραμοῦσα· ἢ λύρα μουσικὴ, ἧ κέχρηται Πολυκράτης· ἢ ἄγκυρα ναυτικὴ ἣν Σέλευκος ἐνεχράττετο τῇ γλυφῇ· κἂν ἁλιεύων τὶς ἢ ἀποστόλου μεμνήσεται, καὶ τῶν ἐξ ὕδατος ἀνασπωμένων παιδίων· οὐ γὰρ εἰδώλων πρόσωπα ἐναποτυπωτέον· οἷς καὶ τὸ προσέχειν ἀπείρηται· οὐδὲ μὴν ξίφος, ἢ τόξον, τοῖς εἰρήνην διώκουσιν ἢ κύπελλα τοῖς σωφρονοῦσιν·—S. Clem. Alex., Pædagog.,] lib. iii. cap. 11. [tom. i. p. 289.]

SERM. I.

Christ, and that the importance of this prophecy, in the first place.

2. The truth of this prophecy will be most clear, if you observe the "They" in the front, and the reflection of that on the former part of the verse, "Christ shall judge among nations, and rebuke many people;" He shall set up His kingdom in men's hearts, subdue and conquer them; that is the meaning of judging,—as the administrators of the Jewish nation, and they that subdued their enemies, were called judges for some time,—and He shall mould men anew into an evangelical temper, that is the interpretation of rebuking; and then, "They," i. e. these subjects of this kingdom of His, these malleable tame evangelical new creatures, that are effectually changed by the spirit and power of Christ's doctrine in their hearts, they that are His disciples indeed, they shall beat their swords into those more edifying shapes, shall profess more christianly trades, and if they do not, be sure they are at the best, if not anti, yet pseudo-christians, either professed enemies, or false friends of Christ; "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if you love one another:" no other character of difference to distinguish a disciple of Christ from any man else, but the *ecce ut se invicem diligunt*, "behold how they love," how they embrace, not how they pursue, or slaughter, "one another:" and so there you have the difficulty cleared, how it comes to pass that there is so little charity among Christians; why? because there is so little Christianity among Christians, so much of the hypocritical guise, of the form of Christian piety, but so little, so nothing of the power of it discernible among us; had but Christ the least real influence on our hearts, it would inflame and animate us with love; had we any of that "salt within us," the only preservation from putrefaction and rottenness of spirit, it would be as the naturalists observe of it, ἐνωτικὸν, *unitive*, and bring along what our Saviour hath joined with it, the peace with others; it is the propriety and peculiarity of the gospel, where it is entertained, to impress this well-natured quality; and wherever it is not impressed, it will not be censorious to affirm, in despite of all the glorious appearances to the contrary, that those men have received the gospel, the name, the grace of

[Isa. ii. 4.]

[John xiii. 35.]

Mark ix. 50.

Christ in vain, which will be demonstrated to you, if I proceed to my second, or last particular, to shew you by what means Christianity undertakes to work this great work, to beat our swords into plough-shares, and our spears, &c. And that is by three strokes, as it were, and impressions upon our souls, 1. by inculcating a peculiar strain of doctrines; 2. by prescribing a peculiar spirit; 3. by setting before us a peculiar example. Every of these very proper moral instruments to this end, though (God knows) the stubborn unmalleable weapons of our warfare have too too often the honour of resisting and vanquishing them all. SERM. I. [2 Cor. vi. 1.]

For the first, his peculiar strains of doctrines, they are of two sorts; either they are the direct contrary to these swords and spears, or else such by way of consequence and result. Directly contrary; such is that of "not avenging ourselves," the μὴ ἀντιστῆναι τῷ πονηρῷ, not retributing of trouble or violence to the injurious, but leaving God and His vicegerents to work all these necessary acts of revenge, or repayment; such is that of loving, blessing, praying for enemies; and, let me tell you, not only our own, but (which is worth the considering) our God's enemies: for, 1. such are all the cursers and persecutors of disciples; the true Christian's enemies there spoken of, they are all God's enemies also, as Saul's persecuting of Christians was the persecuting of Christ: there is no possible separating the hatred of the brethren from enmity to Christ, and therefore Polycarpus an apostolical person and bishop and martyr, one of the first angels of Smyrna in the Revelation, commanding to pray for them that persecute us, takes in not only the heathen powers, and princes, the greatest enemies of God then living, but in plain words the ἐχθροὶ σταυροῦ, the renouncers and enemies of the cross [e], i. e. certainly of Christ Himself. 2. Such were the Samaritans, direct enemies of Christ, and yet such it will not be permitted the disciples to curse. 3. Because the commandment of mercifulness lying on us proportionably to God's pattern,—to be merciful as our Father in heaven is merciful,—it is there said, that He [Rom. xii. 19.] Matt. v. [39.] [Matt. 5. 44.] [Phil. iii. 18.] Luke ix. 55. [Luke vi. 36.]

[e] [S. Polycarp. Ep. ad Philip. cap. 12. The passage does not occur in Greek. The Latin version is, Orate etiam pro regibus et potestatibus et principibus, atque pro persequentibus et odientibus vos, et pro inimicis crucis, ut fructus vester manifestus sit in omnibus, ut sitis in illo perfecti.]

SERM. I.

is merciful to the evil, as well as to the unthankful, to those that have sinned against virtue, in general, as well as against that particular of gratitude; and it is clear, God loves His enemies as well as ours, and out of that love gave His Son for those that had sinned against the first, as well as the second table, and consequently, so are we obliged to do also. Lastly, because St. Paul's reason against avenging ourselves is grounded on God's sole prerogative of punishing male-

Rom. xii. 19.

factors. "As it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay it," saith the Lord; and this privilege of God's sure extends to the punishing of His own, as well as our enemies. Having named this, I need not mention any more plain doctrines of direct contrariety to these hostile weapons; if God hath left us no kind of enemies to hate, neither our own, nor His, the first, the ordinary object of our animosity and revenge; the second, of our very piety and zeal: and so the furious and the

[2 Kings x. 16.]

pious sword, the Jehu-zeal for the Lord of hosts, as well as that other for ourselves, the slaughtering of Christ's or the Christian's enemies, be quite excluded out of our commissions, then sure there is no excuse for keeping so much profitable metal in that unprofitable, cutting, piercing shape; there is far more use of those materials in another form, in that of the plough-share and pruning-hook, the work of repentance being still as necessary, as that other of uncharitableness is unchristian. But then this is not all that Christ hath done by way of pacific doctrines, some other doctrines He hath as effectually contrary to swords and spears, though not so directly and visibly, some mines more secretly to supplant this bloody temper; such are His teaching His disciples humility, and meekness, and patience, and contentedness with our own, four graces, which

[Ps. xlvi. 9.]

if once received into our hearts, are the "breaking the bow," the "knapping the spear asunder," the rending up all unpeaceableness by the roots. What are the roots of strife

[Jas. iv. 1.]

and contentions among men? or in St. James' style, "from whence come wars, and fightings among you?" πολεμοὶ and μάχαι, of the greater and lesser size, the piracies of the first or second magnitude, "are they not from the lusts that war and rage in your members?" what be those lusts? why, the spawn of those two great sensual

principles, anger and desire, sometimes pride, sometimes stomach, sometimes impatience of injuries, and sometimes, and most especially, covetousness, the desiring to have somewhat which God had not made my lot; and nothing but huddling, and blending, and confusion of proprieties, throwing the lots into the helmet again, can give me hope of attaining it; all the irregular swords and spears in the world are in the hands of these lusts, both to forge and manage, and the graces that Christ prescribes, are sent to drive these all out of the field: the humility that Christ prescribes is directly contrary to that pride; the meekness or obedience to superiors, so inculcated in the New Testament, is the mortifying that stomach; the patience, and taking up the cross, and denying myself that hellish piece of sensuality, that of revenge, *ἀντιπαρατάττεται*, is sent out to dwell with that impatience; and contentedness with whatever lot, with that of ravening and coveting. O let but the beatitudes in Matt. v. plant these blessed seeds in us, and our swords will presently be out of fashion, and within a while assaulted and eaten through with the tamest creatures, the rust that themselves beget; your carnal affections will lie useless by you, or else be undiscernibly transformed into calmer and more profitable shapes; and that is the first part of Christ's method in working this change, by a new strain of precepts or doctrines.

His second way is by a new kind of spirit, whether by that we mean the spirit of Christ, or the spirit of the gospel.

1. The spirit of Christ, taken almost in the naturalist's acception of the word "spirit" for a kind of vital or animal spirit. For this flowing from Christ our head, and passing freely through all the members, unites not only to Him, but one to the other also in a vital fellow-membership, to which you know nothing is more contrary or destructive than the sword, division or separation; and this is the argument in St. Paul for the strictest charity, not so much as to tell a falsity one to another,—which is sure less than drawing of swords, calling down fire from heaven one upon another,—because, saith he, "you are members one of another;" all members are united in one spirit. And then though some members are sometimes corrupt and diseased, and therefore [Eph. iv. 25.]

SERM. I.

offend and grieve the other members; nay, 2. though one member sometimes work real injury to the other, the petulancy of the hand or tongue bring mischief to the whole body: and 3. though the members generally differ in opinion one from the other, the smell liking that which the taste utterly dislikes; yet is neither one nor all of these ground sufficient for any member to bear malice, revenge, any thing but love and tenderness of care and bowels towards the other, because of the uniting spirit that passes through them, and gives them joys and sorrows in sympathy one with another, but never animosities, or indignations, undermings or betrayings one of the other.

But then, 2. that which I chiefly mean by the new kind of spirit, is, the spirit of the gospel. In Luke ix. there is a reference to this,—as to a consideration that all disciples of Christ are much concerned in, and from ignorance whereof all our bloody, and fiery, and thundering designs against our own, or the enemies of Christ do proceed,—*οὐκ οἴδατε οἵου πνεύματος ὑμεῖς*, "you know not," or consider not, "what kind of spirit you are of:" the gospel spirit, it seems, was peculiarly qualified, a spirit of a special temper, nothing favourable to the proposals of the Boanerges; and if you would know the kind of it, you shall have it, first positively, then negatively; positively the gospel spirit is (a jewel, will you call it, or) an asterism made up of all those celestial gems even now touched on, poverty of spirit, mourning, meekness, purity of heart, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, not after the cannibal-feast of fellow Christians' blood; again, of mercifulness, peace-making, being persecuted and reviled,—and *πᾶν πονηρὸν ῥῆμα*, not a piece of Rabshakeh's railing rhetoric to be had in hell, which is not poured out on them, and endured cheerfully by them in obedience to Christ,—put all these together, and mix with them such a proportion of self-denial, and cheerful following of Christ, whithersoever He leads, and the quintessence, the elixir that by the help of the alembic is fetched out of all these in union, or refraction, is, in the chemist's style, the spirit of the gospel, the spirit of Christianity. If you will yet more perfectly understand it, you must then look on it negatively, as it is in that place by Christ set opposite to the

[Luke ix. 55.]

[2 Kings xviii. 19.]

spirit of Elias; Elias' spirit you may discern by the five considerations or respects that his person is capable of. SERM. I.

1. Elias was under the law.

2. Elias was a prophet.

3. Elias was a zealot, as the author of the book of Maccabees calls him and Phinehas, and so he was peculiarly in that passage to which the disciples refer. [1 Mac. ii. 54. 58.]

4. Elias called for judgments from heaven.

5. That judgment was particularly fire.

And proportionably to these five Elias' spirit was

1. A legal spirit. 2. A prophetic spirit. 3. A zealotic spirit. 4. A cursing spirit. 5. A fiery spirit. And by the opposition to each and all of these five, you will be able to make up the new qualified spirit, the spirit of the gospel.

I. The legal spirit is that which was observable in the time of the law, especially in order to the planting of the Israelites in Canaan, and rooting out of the inhabitants, and that was a rough, bloody, hating, eradicating spirit; and that legal is certainly outdated and abolished now, and in its place the spirit of the gospel, a smooth, loving, planting spirit, quite contrary to that.

2. The prophetic spirit was that which received immediate directions from Heaven: I mean not from the supernatural influences and motions of grace preventing, or exciting, sanctifying or assisting in the heart of the regenerate man, but (as the spirit of sanctification and the spirit of prophecy are very distant things, so) I say, from the extraordinary revelations of His will by Urim and Thummim, by vision, by dream, by coming of the Spirit, or of the word of the Lord upon them, or to them, *θεοφορουμένοις*, acted and carried by God. And the gospel spirit is that which after the out-dating of prophecies, pretends to no such special revelations, to no other direction, or incitation, or impulsion of the Spirit, than that which lies visible in the New Testament,—*verbum vehiculum spiritus*, and *διακονία πνεύματος*, the word is it that brings and administers the Spirit unto us,—the Spirit that incites us to perform those duties that the word hath prescribed us,—and if to any thing else, contrary to that, hath then need of the exorcist to bind or cast out that spirit,—the spirit which when it comes to be tried whether it be of God or no, pre- [1 John iv. 1.]

SERM. I.

tends not like Mahomet to be a talking with God, whilst he lies foaming in an epileptic fit, but is content to be judged and discerned by the old plain doctrines of the gospel, a regulated, authorized, ordinary, sober spirit.

3. The zealotic spirit was a thing peculiar among the Jews, introduced and settled by the example of Phinehas and Elias by way of precedent and standing law to that nation, whereby it was lawful when a man was taken in some notorious facts, (specified by their law, idolatry, &c.) to run him through, to kill him in the place, without expecting any legal process against him. This was expressly commanded by Moses, "Slay ye every one the men that are joined to Baal-Peor," and accordingly practised by Phinehas upon incitation from God; and when it was done so by a Jew, in the cases provided by the Jewish law, and by divine impulsion, and the person assured that it was so, there was then no harm in it; but when that incitation from God was but pretended only, not true, when in any case but that prescribed by the law, then it was perfect butchery and villainy even among those Jews: and unless in those few precedents of Phinehas and Elias, and the Maccabees, i. e. zealots,—for so the word Maccabee signifies in the Syriac,—it will be hard to find either in Scripture or Josephus,—where there were whole multitudes of such men,—any one example of this practice justifiable even in a Jew; and in opposition to, and not compliance with that, is the gospel spirit quite contrary to the heights of the Jewish practice, never sheds blood upon any but regular commissions, an obedient, orderly, temperate, cool spirit.

Numb. xxv. 5.

4. The cursing spirit, that may be of two sorts; either in passing judgments on men's future spiritual estates, a censorious damning spirit, such as hath been usual in all kind of heretics almost that ever came into the Church;—*nos spirituales*, "we the spiritual," and in the king of China's style, *filii cœli*, "sons of heaven," and all others *animales et psychici*, "animal carnal men;"—or 2. in wishing, praying, calling for curses either on God's or our enemies; and you may know the gospel spirit by the opposition to these, a hoping, charitable, merciful, deprecating, blessing spirit.

Lastly, the fiery spirit is a vehement, violent, untractable, unreconcilable spirit, sets all, wherever it comes, into a

flame and combustion, and will never have peace with any thing which it can possibly consume; nay further, it infuseth warmths, and distempers, and turbulencies into all that come within any reach of it, communicates and diffuses its violences to all others; and the gospel spirit is direct antipodes to that, an allaying, quenching, quieting, cooling spirit. And so you see this new spirit, the spirit of the gospel, of what a temper it is in all these respects, a spirit more fit than lightning to melt the swords in our scabbards, to new forge these hostile weapons into those that are more civil and profitable; and that was the second course by which Christianity was to work this metamorphosis, to beat these swords, &c.

3. And lastly, our Saviour hath contributed toward this great work by the exemplariness of His own practice in this kind; not only, in the first place, in refusing to have the fire from heaven, that the Boanerges would have helped Him to, against the Samaritans,—professed enemies of Christ, and of all that had any kind looks toward Jerusalem; and besides, notorious heretics and schismatics, and yet pretenders to the only purity and antiquity, against all sense and reason, and so most arrogant hypocrites also; and yet all this not enough to inflame Christ's Spirit into that of Elias', or to change His temper into any thing of zeal or anger against these:—nor only, in the second place, in reprehending and trashing of St. Peter's zeal, when it drew the sword in his Master's defence against the high-priest's servants, and indeed against the very crucifiers of Christ: nor only, in the third place, in refusing the aid even of angels from heaven (when they were ready upon His summons) against the heathens that attached Him: but fourthly, and above all, by that answer of His to Pilate, "If My kingdom were of this world, then should My servants fight," &c.,—which was certainly part of that good confession before Pilate mentioned with such honour, 1 Tim. vi. 13,—inferring that because His kingdom was not of this world, because He was not a worldly or an earthly king, therefore His servants were not to fight for Him against a legal power of heathens, though it were but to save Him from crucifying. It is clear it was one of His accusers' main hopes to find Him in Judas Gaulonita's doctrine, that "it was unlawful for God's people (and so for Him that under-

[Luke ix. 54, 55.]

[Matt. xxvi. 52, 53.]

John xviii. 36.

SERM. I.

took to be God's Son) to be subject to idolaters," making advantage of piety (as the Gnostics after did) toward their secular ends, the freeing themselves from subjection in this world: but our Saviour every where disclaims that doctrine; both vindicating Cæsar's prerogative by his coin, and in that good confession to Pilate; from which it is demonstrable, that what was not to be done in defence of Christ when He was in that danger and under that persecution, is no more to be attempted in that case for religion, for Christianity itself. I shall shut up this by leaving in your hands that most glorious lively image of His whole soul and life, delivered to us in one medal, that "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls." To which if you add the sealing, and the practising of this, in the giving up His soul, laying down His life, an offering of charity even for enemies, and yet further for those enemies' souls, this one amulet hung about your necks, one would think were sufficient to charm all the weapons of our warfare, that are so unmercifully carnal, to exorcise and conjure all the swords and spears out of the world, to work new transfigurations and metamorphoses among us, to return the bears and vultures into their old human shapes again, and proclaim an universal truce to all the military affections we carry about us, to our wraths, our covetings, our aspirings, a Sabbath, a jubilee of rest and peace, like that which Jamblichus talks of in the spheres, a *καθολικὴ ἁρμονία*[f], a catholic constant harmony and accord, a present pacification of all our intestine broils, and so a quiet and rest unto our souls; and till this be done, till this Advent prophecy be fulfilled in your ears, you must know there is little of Christianity among us, little of evangelical graces, or evangelical spirit, nothing but legal at the best. That in God's good time there may be more, not in the brain or tongue to elevate the one or adorn the other, but in the *βάθος καρδίας*, the depth and sincerity of the heart, more of the work and power, the spirit and vital energy of the gospel, God of His infinite mercy grant us all, even for the sake and through the operation of His Son Jesus Christ, that wonderful counsellor, that mighty God, that Father of this evangelical state, that Prince, and that God of

Matt. xxii. 21.

[1 Tim. vi. 13.]

[Matt. xi. 29.]

[Isa. ix. 6.]

[f] [Vide Jamblich. de Vita Pythag., p. 52. 4to. Amst. 1707.]

peace; to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be ascribed as is most due, the honour, the glory, power, praise, might, majesty, and dominion, which through all ages of the world hath been given to Him that sitteth on the throne, to the Holy Spirit, and to the Lamb for evermore. *Amen.*

SERMON II.

CHRIST'S EASY YOKE.

MATT. xi. 30.

My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.

SERM. II.

THAT the Christian's heaven should be acknowledged his only blissful state, and yet they which pant for bliss never think fit to enquire after it: that Christ, the way to that heaven, should be truly styled by one prophet, "the desire of all nations;" and yet they that look on Him be affirmed by another prophet, "to see nothing in Him that they should desire Him:" that a rational creature should be made up of such contradictions, as to desire life most importunately, and yet as passionately to make love to death; to profess such kindness to immaterial joys, and yet immerse and douse himself in carnal; to groan and languish for salvation, i. e. an eternal state of purity, and yet to disclaim and fly it, whensoever any impure delight is to be parted with; might have leave to exercise and pose a considering man, were there not one clear account to be given of this prodigy, one reason of this fury, the many "evil reports that are brought up of the way to this good land," the prejudices, fatal prejudices, infused into us, the vehement dislikes and quarrels to all Christian practice, that only passage to our only bliss. We have heard of an angel with a flaming sword at the gate of paradise, which our poetic fear and fancies have transformed into a serpent at the door of the Hesperides' garden,—that angel fallen and turned into a devil,—we have heard of the cannibal Anakims in the confines of the promised land, that devour all that travel toward that region: and our cowardly sluggish aguish fancies have transplanted all these into

[Hag. ii. 7.]

[Isa. liii. 2.]

[Num. xiii. 32; xiv. 36, 37.]

[Num. xiii. 33; Deut. ix. 2.]

Christendom, made them but emblems of Christ's *duri sermones*, the hard tasks, unmerciful burdens that He lays on His disciples, yea and conjured up a many spirits and fairies more, sad direful apparitions, and sent them out all a commanded party to repel or to trash us, to intercept or encumber our passage toward Canaan, to pillage and despoil the soul of all Christian practice, of all that is duty in discipleship.

Three of these prejudices our Saviour seems to have foreseen and prevented in the words of this text.

1. That there is no need of doing any thing in discipleship; Christ came to free from yokes, to release from burdens, the gospel is made all of promises, obedience to precepts is a mere unnecessary; and for the preventing of that prejudice, you have here as a yoke, and a burden, so both of Christ's owning, ζυγός μου and φορτίον μου, "My yoke and My burden."

A second prejudice of them that being forced to confess the necessity of Christian obedience, do yet resolve it impossible to be performed, discerning the burdens in my text, must have them unsupportable burdens, no hope, no possibility for us to move under them; and then *studium cum spe senescit*, their industry is as faint as their hope, desperation stands them in as much stead as libertinism did the other, they are beholden to the weight of their burdens for a *supersedeas* for taking them up: and for the preventing of that prejudice, you have here this character of Christ's burden, not only supportable, but light, "My burden is a light burden."

A third prejudice there is yet behind, of those that having yielded the both necessity and possibility of Christian obedience, are yet possessed of the unpleasingness and bitterness of it, like those in the prophet, cry out, "The burden of the Lord, the burden of the Lord," the yoke a joyless melancholic yoke, the burden a galling pinching burden; and to them hath our Saviour designed the χρηστὸν here, as the most significative epithet to express the nature of the Christian yoke: we have rendered it but imperfectly, "My yoke is easy;" it signifies more richly, "My yoke is a benign yoke," all pleasure and profit made up in the word Κύριος χρηστὸς, [Jer. xxiii. 38.]

SERM. II. 1 Pet. ii. 3. Rom. ii. 4.

"the Lord is gracious;" τὸ χρηστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, signifies, "the bounty," we render it, the "goodness of God," that which immediately before is, "the riches of His bounty," and proportionably the ζυγὸς χρηστὸς, "a gracious bountiful yoke," a mine, a treasure of bounty, a good, a joyous, and a gainful yoke.

And he that is thus answered in all his objections, confuted in all his fears, and prejudices, and excuses for libertinism, if he do not acknowledge the reasonableness of Christ's advice, "take My yoke upon you," take it for its own sake, though it were not laid upon you by Christ, My necessary, My light, My gracious yoke; he that will not accept of some office in the house of so good a master, I know not what kind of address to make to him, I must leave him to Pythagoras' spondes, that could cure a madman, καὶ ἐπανορθοῦν, rectify the errors of his appetite first, and then his mind, first of his spleen, and then his brain, before any portion of this bread of life will be diet for him.

I have drawn you the lines which lie folded up in this text; the filling each up with colours in the shortest manner I could devise, would prove a work of more time than is now my portion. The expedient I have resolved on is, to leap over the two former, and only fasten on my last particular, as that which includes and supposes the two former, as that which will bring its reward with it, invite and feed your patience, and in all probability obtain your belief, because there is never an interest, never a passion about you that it contradicts.

Your patience being thus armed with a sight of the gesses[a], but one stage, and that the smoothest you ever passed, I shall presume you ready to set out with me; and it is to consider that anticipation of the third prejudice in the epithet affixed to Christ's yoke, in the fulness of its significancy, ζυγός μου χρηστὸς, "My yoke is a benign, a gracious, a pleasant, a good, and a gainful yoke."

[a] [This word, which is often used by Hammond, is said in Todd's edition of Johnson's Dictionary to mean "a stage: so much of a journey as passes without interruption." It is not as Todd supposes an error of the press for 'gest.' Richardson's Dictionary speaks of it also as the same word as gest, deriving it from *giste*, a couch or place to rest in, and this from the word *gésir*, to lie, which he further traces to the Latin *jacere*.]

SERM. II.

Yea, and that in this life, at the taking the yoke upon you; a present goodness in it here, though there were never a treasure of rewards, never a heaven after it: at least as the present paradise of a true disciple is considered apart, abstracted from that future expectation, "My yoke is a good yoke," is for the present; the ἐστὶ, "is," hath an influence on the χρηστὸς, as well as on the ἐλαφρὸν, on the gainfulness of the yoke, as well as the supportableness of the burden. And so you see the full of my scope, the utmost of my design, the present advantages of a Christian course, the instant goodness of Christ's service beyond all other callings and preferments in the world; a yoke, but that a good one, a yoke that shall never be repented of by him that bears it, whatever it be apprehended to cost him at the taking up.

And 1. you may please to observe that a yoke hath nothing of hardship in it, it is smoothed and fitted to the neck, rather to ease than press, rather to defend than gall; not as a weight or burden, but only an instrument of advantage, to make the burden that is to be undergone more easy and supportable; and therefore our Saviour counts of it as that which a rational man would be content to take up of his own accord, if he knew the benefit of it, "take My yoke upon you," and be richly rewarded in the taking, "and you shall find rest unto your soul." The entrance on discipleship, making the new vow, converting to God, is this taking Christ's yoke upon us, (as the performing the vow, the practice of the several duties, is the moving under the burden.) And, to prevent mistakes, to forestal all possible objections, I shall acknowledge to you that there is some difficulty in that taking, though not in that yoke, τρηχὺς τὸ πρῶτον, some difficulty in the first setting out, in the breaking off from the former course whatsoever it were, somewhat of fancy, somewhat of interests against it.

[Matt. xi. 29.]

Of fancy: to take leave of an old familiar, to carry out the whole body of sin to its funeral,—that *pompa mortis*, so much more grievous than death itself,—to give up the earth to earth, corruption to corruption, with all the pompous solemnities attendant on an hearse; this, I say, hath somewhat of sadness in it, especially to the inferior brutish part of the man, like the Persian commander in Herodotus, his

SERM. II.

fall is lamented by the horses, and oxen, and Bœotians, all the bestial rude herd of man joining in the *θρηνωδία*.

So besides, there is somewhat of interests, some uneasiness again in the motion necessary to so vast a change, some injury to the old possessors, *aliquid iniqui*, somewhat of pressure in the change itself; some pain in spiritualizing of flesh, racking it, fetching it from the lees, rarifying and attenuating the *πνεῦμα παχυνόμενον ἀπὸ μοχθηρᾶς διαίτης*, the spirit incrassate by vicious diet, as Philoponus calls the habituate sinner, of returning the gross habit of sin to a spareness and slenderness of stature, an exinanition of that carnal appetite which hath brought in all the grosser joys which hitherto we have fed on; and the truth is, this even with St. Paul himself goes for a mysterious piece, "Behold I shew you a mystery, we shall all be changed;" the change of the natural to a spiritual body is a greater work than the raising of the dead: no wonder then that the natural man generally is not so well satisfied with this. Saul is fain to be struck down in the place; a kind of *λειποψυχία*, or "swooning fit," an piration of the animal man necessary to so great a change; as the LXXII have cast Adam not into a sleep (as the Hebrew text) but into an *ἔκστασις*, a being hurried out of himself to make him capable of an helper. Thus when Christ was first born in Bethlehem, Herod the king was troubled and all Jerusalem with him. Such great stupendous felicities are not brought forth without some pangs at birth, some unpleasant throes at the delivery; the very earthly Canaan is not come to, but by passing through a proœmial wilderness. Thus much by way of concession of the some difficulty to the carnal man in taking up of Christ's yoke, the minute of the new creation. But that being supposed,

1 Cor. xv. [51.]

[Gen. ii. 21.]

[Matt. ii. 3.]

Let me now tell you, this is all that is of hardship in the Christian's life, all the unacceptable even to flesh and blood, the instant of putting on the yoke, of entering into the traces, of harnessing for the future race, *ὠδῖνες θανάτου*, as the Greek in the Acts reads it, "the child-birth pangs of dying to sin, of mortifying" *πάθη ἐπὶ γῆς*, the affections that are so fastened on the earth, that like a plantagnus torn from its soil, they bleat and roar again; the concussion or flesh-quake that follows the sudden stop in the vehement course, the vertigo that

[Acts ii. 24.]

the forcible turn in the rapid motion begets, the smart that the passing through the purgative fire costs us; and the fear of this one sharp minute is that that betrays us to all the drudgery and torments in the world, that which makes us so shy of piety, so afraid of all spiritual conceptions: as, you know, that one terror of dying, parting of such ancient mates, makes some good men not over-willing to be with Christ, though they acknowledge it never so much a more valuable state; whereas could we but arm ourselves for this one act of spiritual daring, the pain of ascending the mount Tabor, and being transfigured with Christ, we should soon resolve of the *bonum est esse hic,* "it is good for us to be here," [Matt. xvii. 4.] and set presently to build us tabernacles, never to return to our old shapes or tents again; could we but resolve to set out on this voyage, encounter this one giant, son of Anak, the breaking off from our old customs, there were then nothing but Canaan behind, that *οὖθαρ ἀρούρης*[h], as once Homer called Greece, "the pap of the earth," that fountain of milk and hive of honey,—all the bees and hornets driven out of it,—a succession of uninterrupted felicities streaming through it. Could we but repel the fancy, or support the pangs of one short travail, in contemplation of the joy which the man-child will within a few minutes bring into the world with him, *ῥηϊδίη δ' ἤπειτα πέλει*[i], I am confident Christ would be once more not only *προσδοκία ἐθνῶν,* in Jacob's prophecy, [Gen. xlix. 10.] not only the expectation, but withal the joy, the sensuality of the very Gentiles, that which flesh and blood, man in every of his most inferior capacities, the rational, the moral, yea, and the carnal man would thirst with more joy, taste with more ravishment, devour with less satiety than aught which his present confections of luxury did ever yield him, and thence break out into the Virgin Mother's *Magnificat,* a transportation of joy for the approach of the birth of so much blessedness; or into old Simeon's *Nunc dimittis,* desire no more joy in this life, than that which infallibly attends the taking a Saviour into his arms, those intimate embraces of Christ in the regenerate heart.

To make this more visible and acknowledged in the retail

[h] [Il. ix. 141, 283.]
[i] Hesiod. [Op. et Dies,] lib. i. [290.]

SERM. II.

than it is in the gross, in the coin than it is in the bullion, I shall require your patience but to these two heads of probation: one, by viewing severally some of the chief duties of Christianity: the other, by enumeration of the special good things which have ever been prized by mankind.

The first, I say, by surveying the duties of a Christian, the tasks that are prescribed him by Christ, the particulars of his yoke and burden. Consider them a while, and if they be not the object of all other men's envy, if his toils be not demonstrably the vastest pleasures, his exercises the most joyous divertisements and highest rank of entertainments that any mortal hath arrived to, I shall be content with Cassandra's fate, never to be credited in my affirmations.

For instance, well-doing in general, in the first place, the conscience of any degree of that, of having discharged any part of duty, that *euge bone serve*, from the god within thee, what a ravishment is it to any the meanest undertaker, what an olio of all high tastes compounded together? Their very enemies could say it of the Athenians in Thucydides, that "there was nothing that they could count feast or banquet, but the having done what they ought[j]." And the Persians[k], when they beheld the solemnity of the Grecian Olympic games, such courage and patience of the combatants, and no reward expected but an olive crown, expostulate with Mardonius, why dost thou bring us to fight against those who fight not for money, but virtue? A conscience of having done well, served in with a few leaves about it, was it seems the daintiest dish, and most animating, emboldening reward in nature. And if a Christian cannot outvie those heathens, if it be not in our breasts, as it is in the translations of our Bibles, "a merry heart," all one with "a good conscience," and the attribute of that "a continual feast" to thee as it was to Solomon, believe it, thy taste is mortified, thou art no competent judge of dainties: and that is one part, or indeed the sum of all Christ's yoke, *ἀγαθὴ συνείδησις ἐν πᾶσιν*, "in all things a good conscience."

[Matt. xxv. 21.]

[Prov. xv. 13. 15.]

[Heb. xiii. 18.]

In the second place, not to lead you out of the most vulgar

[j] *μήτε ἑορτὴν ἄλλο τι ἡγεῖσθαι ἢ τὸ τὰ δέοντα πρᾶξαι.*—[Thuc. i. 70.] And Diogenes in Plutarch. de [animi] tranquill. [tom. ii. p. 477 C.] *ἀνὴρ [δὲ, εἶπεν] ἀγαθὸς [οὐ] πᾶσαν ἡμέραν ἑορτὴν ἡγεῖται;*

[k] Herod., lib. viii. [cap. 26.]

road, that our discourse may be the more demonstrative, the trinity of theological virtues, faith, hope, and charity, what are they but so many elevations of the soul above all that is mean and painful; so many steps of entrance into obedience and bliss, into discipleship and paradise together?

For "faith," it is St. Peter's expression, πιστεύοντες ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, "believing, you do exult for joy;" faith naturally hath that acquiescence and joy in it, and that a χαρὰ ἀνεκλάλητος καὶ δεδοξασμένη, an inexpressible and glorified joy, even in this life. Take it but in the meaner of its offices, as it is a trusting God with our temporal weal, a full submission not only to the will but wisdom of God, a resolution that God can choose for us better than we for ourselves, that whatever He sends, His hottest or bitterest potion, is fit for our turns, and so, absolutely better, and even to us (when we see it is His will) more eligible, more desirable than any thing we could have prayed for. That cheerful valiant resignation of all into God's hands, with an old Eli's *Dominus est*, "It is the Lord," let Him do what seemeth Him good, what a blessed pill of rest is this unto the soul! what a sabbath from all that servile work, those horrid perjuries, those base submissions, that the covetous mammonist or cowardly trembler drudges under! Though the earth shake, or the hills be carried into the midst of the sea, he is the cube indeed that Socrates pretended to be, he hath a basis that will not fail, his feet stand fast, he believeth in the Lord. He hath gotten a superiority of mind, that all this region of meteors cannot disquiet; he hath rifled all the sects of the old philosophers, robbed each of them of his master-piece, the sceptic of his ἀδιαφορία and ἀταραξία, indifference and untroubledness, the Stoic of his μὴ ποιεῖν τραγωδίας[1], he hath none of the tragical complaints how tragical soever his sufferings be, and Epicurus of his γαλήνη, tranquillity or calm of mind, to the acquiring of which all his philosophy was designed, a thing so hugely pleasurable, that he hath been taken for a carnal voluptuous swine ever since, upon no other merit but for seeking out those great composers of the soul, so much beyond all other sensuality: those boasts, I say, and prides, those dreams and wishes of

1 Pet. i. 8.

[1 Sam. iii. 18.]

[1] [Vide Antonini ad Seipsum, lib. iii. cap. 7.]

SERM. II.

those philosophers, are now the reality and acquisition of a Christian, an epicurism which faith, and only faith, undertakes to furnish us with. A thing so deeply considerable, that I cannot but resolve all the differences of men's estates and fortunes as well as souls, their secular felicity and infelicity, as well as piety and impiety, to proceed from this one fountain opened by Christ to the house of David. No prince more happy than the peasant in the present advantages of this life, but as he hath more faith than he, the spring of our daily misery as well as our sins is the ὦ ὀλιγόπιστοι, "O ye of little faith."

[Matt. vi. 30.]

And so certainly for hope, that second Christian gem, that royal high-priest of ours that enters within the veil, takes possession beforehand of all that is rich or secret, brings down all the treasures of another world to be our daily portion in this, hope of eternity, hope of heaven, you will not wonder if I assure you it is a far pleasanter companion than the possession of all worldly preferments. You would be amazed to hear a papist describe his purgatory flames so scorching, and yet go cheerfully out of this world into the midst of those flames; but he will satisfy your wonder when he tells you that the expectation of the heavenly joys that those flames do confirm and ascertain to him, though after never so many hundred years, "the precious hope that dwells there[m], and the assurance of a title in heaven[n], a portion in that glorious ἀπογραφὴ, or enrolment, is richly sufficient to allay those flames, to make those scorchings supportable." And then judge what a confluence of pleasures is this one grace supposed to be, which is resolved sufficient to sweeten and recommend a Tophet, to make torments desirable; like the kind gales and benign vapours under the line that Manardus tells of[o], which make the torridest clime habitable; and the presence of that fourth in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, which makes the three children sing in the midst of flames.

[Dan. iii. 25.]

As for charity, that is certainly the μείζων τούτων, superior to either faith or hope, for joy and pleasure, as well as use and excellency. Can there be any thing so ravishing as love,

[1 Cor. xiii. 13.]

[m] μούνη δ' αὐτόθι ἐλπίς.—[Hesiod. Op. et Dies i. 96.]

[n] τοὔνομα ἐν Διὸς αὐλῇ.

[o] Epist. medicin.

love of so for ever-satisfying a beauty, that heroical improvement and elevation of soul, the want of which is as great a punishment as it is a sin, as much of hell in the extinction of this flame as in the raging of that, in the chill numbed as in the raving tormented spirit, as fatal a lethargy from the one as fever from the other. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha," saith St. Paul. [1 Cor. xvi. 22.] Blessed Apostle, I cannot imagine thy gospel spirit could permit thee to deliver those words as a wish or prayer for curses on any even enemy of Christ; may not this form of speech be a scheme of apostolic rhetoric? "If any man love not the Lord Jesus," he is, and shall be, for the very present he is the interpretation of those thundering sounds, "anathema maranatha," a miserable accursed creature; the very not loving, the chilling of that blessed passion within his breast, is the saddest curse that the devil could design his hatedest enemy.

Add unto this that other branch of charity, that ray which Prometheus in the figure stole from heaven to inspire and warm the world with, that inferior elementary fire, love of our fellow-men, our fellow-Christians, and tell me if there be any thing so capable not only of the *quam bonum*, but the *quam jucundum* too, that hath so much of the pleasant as well as the virtuous in the composition. The ground of all pleasure is agreement and proportionableness to the temper and constitution of any thing; the reason, saith Boethius, "that men love music so well, is the answerableness of the notes in that to those observed by nature in the fabric of our bodies:" and say we, is there any thing so agreeable and harmonical, so consonant to our reasonable nature, to the ingenuity of our kind, and consequently so universally delightful to all, that have not put off man in exchange for panther and tiger, as that which Christ hath left us our duty, yea and our reward, the loving of the brethren; that language, that song of love that we are to practise here, that we may chant it in heaven eternally? It is said to be a speech of Christ's which the Nazarene Gospel hath recorded, though our Bibles have not,—and it seems by St. John, all was not written which Christ spake to them,—*Nunquam læti sitis nisi cum fratrem in charitate videritis*, "There is no spectacle of [John xx. 30; xxi. 25.]

SERM. II.

delight to a Christian," nothing of value sufficient for a disciple to rejoice at, "but to see his fellow-disciples embracing one another in love;" and they say Mahomet was such an admirer of this quality, that "he once resolved to have inserted a precept of good-fellowship among his laws, because he thought he had observed" (though most ridiculously mistaken) "that that which is indeed the bane, was a promoter of this charity." I conceive I have the suffrage of all mankind, that "charity is a pleasing grace," and of the wisest and most pondering observers, that "friendship is the only sweet neighbour and companion of life[p]," that which being drained from its baser mixtures,—which would otherwise cause satiety,—becomes the prime ingredient in the glorified saints, of whose state we understand little, but that they are happy and love one another, and in that for ever happy, that they for ever love one another; *charitas nunquam excidit*, and so their bliss *nunquam excidit* neither. And then, behold and admire the goodness of this yoke; Christ's design even in this life to set up charity, friendship above all virtues, as high as it is above all felicities, to settle that for the prime Christian duty which hath most of present blessedness in it, to make that our burden which is our bliss, our yoke which is our boon, and withal to separate it from all those mixtures which would either embitter or shorten, cool or satiate our love, the lusts and excesses and the prides, that would make the most ingenuous delight either less ingenuous or less delightful; that love of my brother's virtues, love of his soul; love of the nature that Christ assumed and died for, and carried to heaven with Him; love of the image of God in Him, that most transporting durable pleasure; and all this will be abundantly sufficient to make up a second instance of the χρηστὸς ζυγὸς, the graciousness and pleasantness of this yoke.

[1 Cor. xiii. 8.]

A third shall be by referring you to the most extemporary view of the commands of the Decalogue, which Christ came not to destroy, but to fill up and perfect. Temperance is the only epicurism; continence or conjugal chastity the only *supersedeas* to that black flame that is the incontinent's daily hell even in this life: but above all, that precept of the Old, and mystery or craft of the New Testament, "Thou shalt not

[Ex. xx. 17.]

[p] ἡδὺς γείτων τῆς ἡμετέρας ζωῆς.

covet," that of contentment with whatsoever lot, the prohibition of all desire[q], which seemeth such a galling restraint to the carnal man, with his bored tub of insatiate desire[r], as Jamblichus calls it, about him, but to him that hath taken this yoke upon him, is the gainfullest, not duty, but donative, not burden, but purchase, and preferment, that any mortal is capable of. The philosopher could resolve it the way to help any man to whatever he wanted, *detrahere cupiditatibus*, to pare so much off from his desires, as his desires were larger than his fortune. To bring down his ambitions to his lot, would be as rich a prize as the compassing and acquiring all his ambitions: contentment is (in earnest) the philosopher's stone, that makes gold of any thing; the Pandora's box, that hath all wealth, and honour, and pleasure in its disposing; makes the poorest eremite, the richest possessor; the most scorned abject, the most honourable person; the recluse, or the mortified Christian, the most voluptuous liver in a kingdom; every diminution that can come by the malice of men or devils, a pleasurable calamity[s]; whilst the largest possessions in nature, without this one skill, *ἔμαθον καὶ μεμύημαι*, this sovereign piece of alchymy, are still the perfectest beggary imaginable. The devil's whole map or landscape of all the kingdoms and glory, if (as liberally offered, so) actually bestowed, is not able to satisfy the lusts of one eye; much less to fill up the angles and vacuities of one heart without it. That one prudent instruction of SERM. II.

Quod sis esse velis nihilque malis[t],

in one poet, or

Permittes ipsis expendere numinibus[u]

in another, or

ἄλλ' ἔχε σιγῇ μῦθον, ἐπίτρεψον δὲ θεοῖσι

in a third[x], "stand still and see the salvation of our God," is a far richer provision than all their more glittering fictions of golden apples, and golden showers, and golden fleeces, and [Ex. xiv. 13.]

[q] *πᾶσα ἐπιθυμία.*

[r] *πίθος τετρημένος ἀπέραντος ἐπιθυμία.*

[s] *[τοῖς δ' ἐγὼ ἀντὶ πυρὸς δώσω] κακὸν, ᾧ κεν [ἅπαντες] τέρπωνται [κατὰ θυμὸν, ἐὺν κακὸν ἀμφαγαπῶντες.]* —Hesiod. Op. et Dies i. [58.]

[t] [Martial. x. 47.] [u] Juv. x. 347. [x] Od. *τ'*. [502.]

SERM. II.

golden rods, that could make such sudden metamorphoses, yea and of the χρύσεα δίκτυα[y], the golden nets, the golden ages can afford us. "In heaven," saith Christ, "they neither eat, nor drink, marry, nor are given in marriage," and yet are better satisfied and pleased than they below that are fed in Mahomet's dining-room, or lodged in his seraglio: the not desiring those pleasures of life is to them the same thing with advantage that the enjoying them is to others,—as the poet that begs two things of Mars[z], "either valour for war, or peace that he may not need that valour," would be richly provided for, which soever was granted him:—and this is, in Christ's language, being ἰσάγγελοι, "equal to the very angels." It seems it is the angels' special advantage above us men, that they desire not the ταῦτα πάντα, the "all these things," which the luggage of flesh about us makes to us so necessary; and no such crane, such engine to elevate our nature to this ἰσαγγελία, to this so "angelical a state," as μὴ ἐπιθυμεῖν, this so liberal a "science of contentment," which not only makes romances creditable, finds mines in our closets, under every cushion we kneel on, rains down both the Indies into our treasury, satisfies all our needs, fills all our vacuities, but is withal the noblest act of wisdom, of superiority of mind, of prowess, and conquest of ourselves, that any book but that of life, any place but heaven can give us story of; and therefore sure a ζυγὸς χρηστὸς, "a yoke," a command of Christ, but that a benign and gainful yoke, in the third place.

[Luke xx. 35, 36.]

A fourth instance I cannot omit, though I suppose the most vulgar fancy hath prevented me in it,—because Aristotle hath a note in his Rhetorics that "some kind of auditors are most wrought upon by such,"—and that is from the catalogue of the blessing graces, in the fifth of Matthew, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, the meek," &c. In the present they are blessed, yea and would be so, though there were never a heaven of blessedness behind for them. Will you examine the truth of this in a few of them?

1. Poverty of spirit: whether a preparation of spirit to be

[y] [χρύσεα δῶρα.—Hom.] Od. π'. [185.]

[z] ——— ——— ——— θάρσος
δὸς μάκαρ, εἰρήνης τε [μένειν ἐν ἀπήμοσι θεσμοῖς.]
Hom. hymn. in Mart. [15.]

poor, and then it is blessed contentment that just now we parted with; or whether it be humility, blessed humility, and then, beside the advantages it hath toward another life, "grace to the humble, to the humble more grace," and at last heaven to the humble, yea, and more heaven,—as in the learned rules of husbandry they are appointed "to plough, to sow, and to reap too all naked[a]," humility portrayed by that nakedness, being the only auspicious posture, the only catholic qualification for all seasons:—beside these advantages, I say, it is over and above, even in the eye of the world, an amiable graceful quality, hath a present secular blessedness in it, a calm of soul to itself, a controlling loveliness in respect of others, and a world of conveniences attending it. It is that wherein heaven and earth are met as rivals: God Himself a making court to it, "With him will I dwell," and in the oracle, *γάνυμαι τόσον ὅσσον Ὀλύμπῳ*· there are two residences, palaces, thrones for God, heaven and an humble soul; and for men, a plain *φίλτρον* and *θελκτήριον*, to them, an enchantment or charm of respect and love, wherever it is met with; whereas in the mean time pride goes alone in state, only with a train of menial scorns and curses after it; it is a kind of excommunicating sin, drives away confidants, counsellors, servants, graces, the very credit and reputation which it courts, all kind of company but devils and parasites, that *pessimum genus inimicorum*, that worst kind of devil of the two. So true is that of Solomon, "Better is it to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud:" the comparison there is set as betwixt the lowly and proud, so betwixt the humble spirit and dividing the spoil; there is no need to mention any benefit of humility, the humble spirit, it seems, is reward enough to itself, and all the proud man's prizes are not comparable to it in this life.

[Jas. iv. 6.]

[Is. lvii 15.]

Prov. xvi. 19.

So for meekness, it is a lovely grace again; "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," a more gallant embroidery, more enamouring dress, which hath more of the agreeable in the look of it, than all the other helps of beauty can afford that sex which is there spoken of: but especially that notion

1 Pet. iii. 4.

[a] —— *γυμνὸν σπείρειν, γυμνὸν δὲ βοωτεῖν,*
γυμνὸν δ' ἀμᾶσθαι.—Hes., [Op. et Dies] lib. ii. [10.]

SERM. II. [Ex. xx. 12.]

of meekness that consists in obedience to our lawful superiors, which,—beside the other many conveniences of it, "that thy days may be long in the land," &c., long life in a Canaan,—is a most advantageous gainful duty, such as if it had applications made to it, would infallibly leave the prince the only uneasy person in the kingdom, because he only were assigned the task, the painful, thankless, yet necessary task of commanding, and deprived of the *obsequii gloria,* that far more glorious, I will add, and pleasant way of obeying. The glory of it such, as that Gerson having discerned in the angels two habitudes, one "of waiting upon God[b]," the other "in the ruling and managing of things below," resolves, that if that angel were to set himself out in a lustre, to triumph in a magnificat, it would be certainly in the Virgin Mary's style, *humilitatem famuli,* that he were a meek servant of God's, rather than a prince of so many myriads of subjects. And for pleasure, I shall profess my sense so far from doting on that popular idol, liberty, that I hardly think it possible for any kind of obedience to be more painful than unrestrained liberty: were there not some bounds of magistrate, of laws, of piety, of reason in the heart, every man would have a fool, they say, I add, a mad tyrant to his master, that would multiply him more sorrows than the briars and thorns did Adam, when he was freed from the bliss at once, and the restraint of paradise, and was sure greater slave in the wilderness than he was in the enclosure. Would but the Scripture permit me that kind of idolatry, the binding my faith and obedience to any one visible, infallible judge, or prince, were it the pope, or the mufti, or the grand Tartar, might it be reconcilable with my creed, it would be certainly with mine interests, to get presently into that posture of obedience. I should learn so much of the barbarian ambassadors in Appian[c], which came on purpose to the Romans to negotiate for leave to be their servants: it would be my policy, if not my piety, and may now be my wish, though not my faith, that I might never have the trouble to deliberate, to dispute, to doubt, to choose, (those so many profitless uneasinesses,) but only the favour

[b] Mentemque profundam circumeunt.—Boeth. [This is a mistaken reference, no such passage occurring in Boethius.]

[c] [This is probably a mistake for Livy. Vide Liv. vii. 31.]

to receive commands, and the meekness to obey them; so demonstrably true is the *μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς*,—the very meekness is their blessedness,—and from thence this part of the gainfulness of this yoke. SERM. II. [Matt. v. 5.]

I will detain you but with one more of that catalogue, that of mercifulness, the pleasurablest burden in the world; there is no such kind of inward delight, and sensuality, as it were. Liberality is a kind of tickling to the soul[d], it is hard to conceal the pleasure of it, to keep it from boiling over, from running out at mouth in vain-glory. To make a poor man happy, and by a seasonable alms to reprieve and rescue him that was as it were appointed to death, is that godlike quality, as Pythagoras agrees with Christ, that kind of creative power, that of all things men are best pleased with; and therefore naturally they love those better, as their creatures, whom they have thus obliged, than any their liberalest benefactors: this the good-natured tyrant Phalaris, if his image be truly drawn in his epistles, took more joy in than in all his other greatness, designed that tyranny (that cost him and others so dear) to no other end, than that it might yield him that one pleasure, the power of obliging many; and accordingly he woos and beseeches to be allowed this favour, nay, quarrels and threatens his bull to those that would not afford him this joy of pouring out his largesses upon them. This so delightful a piece of duty, so perfect voluptuousness to any ingenuous man, is withal, let me tell you, be it never so incredible, the gainfullest trade, the thrivingest way of merchandize for the wealth of this world, that any projector can direct you to. Give me leave for once to interpose in secular affairs thus far, as to assure you of that, that I will pawn my whatever is mine for the truth of it,—and for which I conceive I have so many plain promises in the Scripture, that it were infidelity (in me, I am sure) to doubt of it,—that the exercise of this duty of alms-giving was never the impoverishing of any family, but constantly the enriching. Let it be tried, and I will once set up the insurer's office, that whatever goes out on that voyage, shall never miss to come home with gain; there is no man that parteth with any

[d] ὃς μὲν γάρ [κεν ἀνὴρ ἐθέλων] μέγα δώῃ,
χαίρει τῷ δώρῳ καὶ τέρπεται [ὃν κατὰ θυμόν.]—Hes., lib. i. [355.]

SERM. II.

[Mark x. 30.] thing for "Christ's sake," saith He, "but he shall have an hundredfold more in this life." Add but this χρήσιμον to the χρηστὸν, this of gain to that of delight, the policy to the even sensual ravishment of it, and you will resolve that Christ was a good master; that if you had been called to counsel at that great parliament, had had your negative in that power of making laws for mankind, you would not have chosen a smoother and more agreeable yoke for yourselves, than this that Christ hath designed for you.

I promised to make this as evident by another head of probation, the enumeration of the special goods that have ever been prized by mankind; but that were a new deep, and you have no stock of patience to hold out that voyage. Among all that have ever pretended to that title, I will suppose that of honour hath gotten the primogeniture, supplanted all other pretenders in an ingenuous auditory. And therefore one word to that, and I shall think I have made good my undertaking.

Honour I conceive to be the daughter of heroic action, and specially of victory: and is there any such sweeping triumphant conqueror in the world as the regenerate Christ-

[1 John v. 5.] tian? νικᾷ κόσμον, "he overcometh the world;" overcomes

[1 Sam. xvii. 35.] himself, that lion and that bear that David combated with, his furious rageful passions, Achelous in all his shapes; and is always in pursuit of that victory, νικᾷ, still in the present, he is always overcoming; overcomes enemies, the injurious person by not retributing of injuries[e], the very tyrant persecutor,—whose adoration he hath when he can get none of his mercy, whilst the other that is frighted out of his conscience and integrity, is scorned and kicked into hell by him, —yea, and the devil, that τὸ πονηρὸν, "the evil one," whom

[Jam. iv. 7.] when the Christian resists, he conquers,—*fugiet*, "he shall fly from thee,"—yea, and overcomes, and reproaches, and triumphs over all the world besides, practises those duties upon Christ's commands, which neither Jew nor heathen ever thought themselves obliged to. Athenagoras[f] can challenge all the philosophers and lawgivers of the world to equal Christ in one precept, or Christians in one practice of theirs, that of blessing of enemies; and no Goliath of Gath

[e] πονηρὸν ἀγαθῷ.

[f] [p. 42. ed. Dechair, Oxon. 1706.]

being able to answer his challenge, no uncircumcised Philistine of confidence to meet him,— SERM. II.

μοῦνος ἀνὴρ συλῇσεν ὅλον στρατὸν,

the Christian is the only victor, he conquers the whole world about him, yea, and those glittering courtiers of the superior world, outvies and conquers angels in that one dignity of suffering for Christ, and so becomes the renownedest champion under heaven.

To this I should add again, if I had not said so much of it already, and if it were not a baser earthier consideration, the profit and secular advantage of which the Christian life, let the insensate worldling think what he will, hath the peculiar only promise from Him which hath the sole disposing of it. Some mistakes there are in judging what worldly prosperity is; let it be rescued from these mistakes, as particularly from that of signifying a present few months vicissitude of power and wealth,—so sure to be paid (and confuted from deserving that title) by that of the prophet, "When thou ceasest to spoil thou shalt be spoiled,"—let it signify, as alone it doth truly signify, that competency, not that superfluity, which hath all the advantages, and none of the pains of wealth in it, and no question the doing our duty, though it be the present leaving of all for Christ's sake, is that which doth not use to fail of the liberalest sort of harvest, the hundred-fold more in this life, i. e. all the true advantages of those possessions, without that addition which would be bare profitless encumbrance; and which, if it were added, would prove a most disadvantageous diminution. I shall venture the brand and punishment that belongs to the most infamous cheat, whenever any disciple of Christ shall think fit to call me his underminer or enemy for this doctrine, when he shall think fit to tell me really that honesty is not the only prudence, the surest foundation and treasure of worldly bliss. [Is. xxxiii. 1.]

I have done with the particulars I promised: and now put all together, and you will never think the preacher a tyrant more, never pity the melancholic, but envy the ravishments of him that hath taken up this yoke,—yea though it have a cross annexed to it,—to follow Christ; you will never put in

SERM. II.

for your part in Mahomet's paradise, exchange your purer gospel for a grosser Alcoran, having in this very yoke of Christ a satisfaction to all your longings, a richer harvest of joys in the present possession, than all the false prophets and false Christs could feign for their clients in the latest reversion. And having thus fortified you, I shall now challenge the rival Satan to come out to thee, to bring forth his pleas and pretensions for thee, to interpose his exceptions if he have any, why this hour should not be the solemn era, the date of thy long farewell to the kilns and fleshpots of Egypt, why this minute should not be that of the blessed shrill trumpet's sound, that of proclaiming a jubilee, a manumission for thee,—and all thy fellow-captives,—never to return to his galleys again, who art offered so far a more gainful, more easy, more pleasant, and more liberal service. Satan, I am confident, dare not say his wages are comparable to those that here I have tendered thee from Christ; let him shew me in all his kingdoms of the earth, in his treasury of gold, or gynæceum of beauty, any thing fit to be a rival with the graces, not which the poets feign, but which the sermon on the mount prescribes,—ingredient and constitutive of a Christian,—both for the gain and pleasure, the commodity and the delight of them even to flesh and blood,—when the one bedlam heat of youth or lethargic custom of sin is over, —and I shall no longer pretend to get any proselyte out of his hands.

And if after all this I must be content with the fate of other sermons, to have played a vain-glorious prize, *ἀέρα δέρων*, wounding none but the air this whole hour together; if I must miscarry in this so charitable undertaking, and may not be heard when I come but to comply with you in all your interests, to direct you through one Canaan to another, to lay you out a paradise here for your road to an eternal heaven, I confess I am fallen upon a peevish auditory, a company of sick fancies and crest-fallen souls. For whose cure, I might yet further set off all this, and improve it into little less than a demonstration, by the view of the contrary not only unpleasant and unprofitable, but even painful tormenting trade of sin; those so many limbos in passage to the deeper hell; that Sodom of filth and burning in the way to

[1 Cor. ix. 26.]

a Tophet of worms and flames. But I had rather fancy you the sheep in Aristotle which the green bough would lead, than the goats in the same philosopher, that the nettles must sting, whom the cords of a man might draw, than the whips of scorpions drive into paradise, into Canaan; being confident that I have at this time revealed such precious truths unto you, that he whom they do not melt and charm, and win to enter into this so necessary, so feasible, so gainful a service, father Abraham's divinity would prejudge and conclude against him, that "neither will that man convert, though one should rise from the dead and preach unto him." [Luke xvi. 31.] If there be any here of this unhappy temper, the only reserve I have to rescue him is my prayer, that God would touch his heart, that he would say Ephphatha, that if there be any consolation in Christ, any comfort of love, any virtue, any praise, any such thing as paradise here, or heaven hereafter, we may every of us think of these things, and having entered into the blessed family of this good master, we may all serve Him acceptably here, fight under His banner, overcome by His conduct, and reign with Him triumphantly hereafter. [Mark vii. 34.] [Phil. iv. 8.]

Now to Him which hath elected, created, redeemed, called, justified us, will consummate us in His good time, will prosper this His ordinance to that end, will lead us by His grace to His glory; to Him, &c.

SERMON III.

EPHRAIM'S COMPLAINT.

JER. xxxi. 18.

I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn Thou me, and I shall be turned.

SERM. III.

THIS text is a sad soliloquy of a provoking afflicted people. *Ephraim transmigrantem*, reads the Vulgar; and sure מתנודד, which we read "bemoaning," would be better rendered thus, "the ten tribes sealed up in a black night, a fatal last captivity."

To parallel our state with Israel in the *transmigrantem*, is not my design, much less in the bemoaning; that is but a piece of unseasonable pusillanimity that our English hath imposed upon the text, and our Saviour hath inspirited us into a more cheerful guise in suffering, the χαίρετε καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, "rejoice and be exceeding glad," the most blissful joyous condition of any. [Matt. v. 12.]

The parallel, I fear, will prove too perfect in the words themselves, which Ephraim then was overheard to utter, and perhaps some infidel hearts may be a whispering now; and that I may prevent this parallel I have pitched upon these words, "I have surely heard Ephraim," &c.

The sense of Ephraim's μονωδία thus sadly muttered, it is possible you may not articulately understand: I shall briefly be his interpreter, by giving you a plain paraphrase of the verse.

'I heard the ten tribes in a melancholic reflection on their state, thus whispering within themselves; We have long been punished by God, and no more wrought on by those punish-

ments than a wild unmanaged bullock,' i. e. not reformed or mended at all by this discipline,—the Targum hath cleared the rendering ולא אלפנא, "We have not been taught," and the Septuagint's οὐκ ἐδιδάχθην[a] hath done so too,—but then, 'turn Thou me, return my captivity, restore us to our liberty and our Canaan again, and then no doubt we shall be turned, reformed and mortified by that change[b].'

Having thus laid bare the words before you, you will presently discern the sum of them, a people unreformed under God's rod, petitioning to be released from that smart, because it did not mend them, pretending that prosperity would work wonders on them.

And this you will dissolve into these three specials, each worth our stay and pondering.

1. God's judgment, what course is fittest to reform sinners, not the delicate, but the sharp, that of smiting, *Tu percussisti*, "Thou hast smitten."

2. Man's judgment, or the sinner's flattering persuasion of himself, quite contrary to God's; a conceit, that roses are more wholesome than wormwood, that prosperity will do it better, and a bribing God with a promise that it shall do it,

[a] And accordingly St. Chrysostome's Greek copy must be corrected, and read thus, ἐπαίδευσάς με Κύριε καὶ οὐκ ἐπαιδεύθην, ἀλλ' ἐγενόμην ὡς μοσχὸς ἀδίδακτος. "Thou hast instructed me, Lord, and I was not instructed, but I became as an untaught, unmanaged ox or heifer."—Tom. vi. [p. 413.] Serm. Eundem esse Deum Vet. et Nov. Test. [This is the reading in the edition of Ducæus, as well as in that of Savile and the Benedictine editors, who all agree in considering this homily spurious. It occurs in each of these editions in the sixth volume.]

[b] That this is the meaning of the words will appear by the consequents, when they are once rendered and understood aright, which now seem to resist this interpretation, and that is caused by the ill rendering of them. They are to be read thus, verse 19. "Surely when Thou shalt have turned me (or brought me back) I shall repent, when Thou shalt shew me (Thy mercies) I shall strike my thigh,"—a ceremony which was used by the Jews in the days of atonement or expiation, diebus כפרים,—"I am ashamed, yea and confounded, because I bear," &c.—i. e. I am so troubled at my punishment, that I can have no leisure to mend. 20. "Is Ephraim My son?" —Filius honorabilis mihi, saith the Vulgar,—"is he My darling?—Filius delicatus, "My fondling?"—i. e. sure he must thus think of himself, and believe of Me, that I am so fond that I cannot live without him; for else sure he would never say thus, that he will not repent unless he be well used, unless I bring him back to his country again. "When I have spoken enough with him,"—admonished, advised him sufficiently,—"I will in any wise remember him," i. e. his impenitence, and chastise this obduration of his,—"therefore My bowels are troubled about him,"—i. e. I am very angry with him, for bowels note any violent affection. "Can I in any wise have mercy on him?"—when all My chastisements work not upon him, when he will not amend without prosperity. That this is the sense, and not that which our English inclines to believe, appears by this, that these ten tribes returned not, and therefore the next verse, 21, must be applied to the twelve tribes, not the ten.

SERM. III.

converte et convertar, "Thy smitings have done no good on me: turn Thou me, and I shall be turned."

3. The stating of this difficulty betwixt God and man, and in that, the falseness of man's judgment; and the fallaciousness of such his promise: 1. In respect of God, who will never send them prosperity, that adversity wrought no good on. And 2. of prosperity itself, which would never do that work on those, if God should send it, intimated in the prophet's recounting and upbraiding this speech of Ephraim, "I have surely heard Ephraim," &c.

I begin first with the first, God's judgment, what course is fittest to reform sinners, not the delicate but the sharp, that of smiting.

And all the proof I pretend to have from this text for this is the *percussisti* in the front. It is clear God had smitten Ephraim, and God's actions are a declaration of His judgment, His smiting a sufficient assurance that nothing else is judged by God so likely to reform Ephraim, and that upon these two plain heads of probation.

1. That whatever is, whatever is come to pass, is certainly God's will it should be.

2. That what was thus God's will, was designed to some benign end, and in short, to nothing in Ephraim, but his reformation.

1. That whatever comes to pass is certainly God's will. Not still His will, so as to be matter of decree,—save only of permission,—that thou shouldst do it, and therefore even those things that are most necessarily to come, shall be matter of the greatest guilt, and woe to those by whom they come. But His will, His overruling decretory will, that I should suffer it, His hand and His counsel, προορίζων γενέσθαι, "predetermining that to be done" which none but Herod and Pilate, gentiles and devil, against the express will of God, and His child Jesus were gathered together to do. All the sin and furies, guilt and damnation of hell may be in the ποιεῖν, the doing or executing God's will,—as believe it, there is not a more formidable trade in the world than that of which Satan alone hath the patent, and men do but entrench on hell whensoever they exercise it, that of the *lictor et carnifex*, of being God's rods, God's executioners,—but

Matt. xviii. 7.

Acts iv. 28.

then all the mercy, and all wisdom, bounty, and divinity, sometimes the redeeming of a world, in the γενέσθαι, "the being done." Not the softest affliction or bloodiest tyranny had ever come into the world had not God permitted, and for our sins decreed to permit the doors to be open for it. Not the lightest wound or deepest furrow on a poor Christian's shoulders, but hath characters of God's hand in it, superscribing him νόμισμα Χριστοῦ[c], in Ignatius' phrase, "the coin of Christ," a stamp of His impressing; and as the painter had so interweaved his own face in Minerva's picture, that you could not behold one without discerning the other, so when the image of Christ is impressed on us, I mean the image of the crucified Saviour, the thorns on the head, the spitting on the face, the sponge of vinegar and gall at the mouth, and the one wound on the whole body, "when the conformity to this image of the Son is sealed upon us," that seal of the Tiphereth, or the Magnus Adam, (as the cabalists are wont to call it,) I mean of the archetypal sufferer Christ, is impressed so hard that it prints quite through the bottom of him, leaves the impression on the *malcuth*, the bride, the house of Israel, the poor crucified Church here below; when I say that sad original is thus copied upon us, there is no avoiding the sight, no escaping the acknowledgment of that great Painter's face that drew these parallel signatures both on Christ and us, or in St. Paul's phrase, "predestined us to be conformable to that image of His Son," ἀνταναπληροῦν, by way of correspondence, of antitype, "to fill up the remainders of His sufferings in our flesh," and as punctually elected us to this συσταύρωσις, this "co-suffering" for, and after Christ, as to the συνδοξάζεσθαι, we trust He hath, to the also "being glorified with Him."

Rom. viii. 29.

Col. i. 24.

[Rom. viii. 17.]

These are the στίγματα Ἰησοῦ, literally and exactly, the prints or brands of Christ, the works of His hands as well as the transcripts of His sufferings; and as this may give us a perfect satisfaction in whatsoever the most smitten condition, a πᾶσαν χαράν, all joy when we are thus vouchsafed and dignified[d], especially if we shall have transcribed the active as

[c] [ὥσπερ γάρ ἐστιν νομίσματα δύο, ὁ μὲν Θεοῦ, ὁ δὲ κόσμου, καὶ ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἴδιον χαρακτῆρα ἐπικείμενον ἔχει, οἱ ἄπιστοι τοῦ κόσμου τούτου, οἱ δὲ πιστοὶ ἐν ἀγάπῃ χαρακτῆρα Θεοῦ Πατρὸς διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, δι' οὗ ἐὰν μὴ αὐθαιρέτως ἔχωμεν τὸ ἀποθανεῖν εἰς τὸ αὐτοῦ πάθος, τὸ ζῆν αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἡμῖν. —S. Ignat. ad Magn., cap. 5.]

[d] καταξιούμενοι, Acts v. 41.

SERM. III.

well as passive part of His image, or if this suffering teach us to transcribe it, so will it be a first proof of the point in hand, a declaration of God's opinion by His prescriptions, that nothing is so fit for our turn as smiting.

But then this first proof will not perfectly come home to the conclusion, unless we improve and sharpen it with the second, that this smiting, as it already appears to be God's will, so it is by God designed to Ephraim's good, the greatest good for rebellious Ephraim, the bringing him to repentance, and that if any thing else could have tended so directly to that end, Ephraim had never been thus smitten. The foundation of this lies in the superlative love of God extended even to enemies, and that evidenced by His manner of prescribing that to us, with an *ab exemplo* from the example of His own perfection; who, it seems by that argument, is a benefactor and blesser even of enemies, and whatever He sends to the most hostile Ephraim, it is method of deliberate charity, the bitterest recipes designed on purpose,—neither by chance nor malice, those two heathen principles of theology, *τύχη* and *φθόνος δαίμονος*, but, I say, on purpose,—from love and pondering, from judgment and from bowels, as that which as long as there is any hope of recovery, will do it, if any thing, and therefore cannot in charity be withdrawn while there is hope; and when there is none, is then to be spared, not lavished out, like Galen's generous medicaments, that must not be dishonoured, or cast away on the desperate patient, but preserved to do noble and signal cures on those that are capable and worthy of them.

Matt. v. 48.

Such are these caustic plasters preparatory to the incarnative, the knife and the lance that Hippocrates reckons among the *μαλαγμάτων γένεα*, the mollifying preparations that the physician must always carry about with him: this is the new and, as late artists tell us, the truer notion of the fever, not as of a disease, but an endeavour and strife of nature to cure one, as when there is a thorn in the hand, or burdenous excrement in the body, nature heaves and plunges, puts itself into a passion and flame to thrust it out; and then to cure that fever, to quench that flame, to allay or trash nature in that march, is to disarm the friend, and side with the adversary: and such it seems was the messenger of Satan to St. Paul, that medicinal thorn in the flesh, to prick the rising,

[2 Cor. xii. 7.]

SERM. III.

and let out the putrid humour, that he might not be puffed up, and exalted above measure, and God would not be so unkind as to hearken to his importunity, in giving it leave to depart from him.

If you will further see the opinion and judgment of God in this matter, I shall mention but one evidence more of it, the notes of His constant practice through the whole Scripture.

The briers and thorns were immediately designed by God to the first sins, to repair the errors and crimes of paradise.

Afterward the rod was the only engine by which Moses was to work all his miracles on the rock, on the Egyptians, on the more obdurate Israel; all the exchange and variety was only this, the rod sometimes transformed into a serpent, or else multiplied into an army of frogs, and flies, and locusts, when an obdurate rebellious sinner, a Pharaoh was to be softened: and if you mark it, when upon the importunity of Moses God was persuaded to withdraw that rod, to intermix deliverances, these never wrought any good upon Pharaoh, "When Pharaoh saw that there was respite, respite but for a minute, he hardened his heart," &c. An observation that made St. Basil resolve that "it was God's patience," or *μακροθυμία*, that hardened Pharaoh's heart[e], the removings of His plagues, intercalations of mercy: the taking of the water from the fire, and letting it cool again, that as Aristotle saith, makes it freeze so hard and so speedily. The devil and the magicians would have been better at the cure of a hard heart than Moses and his prayers; they could only conjure up more blood, and more frogs, but could not remove any, and that it seems was the most likely means to have kept him humbled, and therefore in the New Testament it is

[Exod. iv. et seq.]

Exod. viii. 15.

[e] [διόπερ ἐπειδὴ ἔδει συντριβῆναι αὐτὸν, ὁ φρόνιμος καὶ σοφὸς τῶν ψυχῶν οἰκόνομος διῳκήσατο αὐτὸν περιφανῆ γενέσθαι καὶ πᾶσιν ἐξάκουστον, ἵνα ἄλλοις γοῦν ὠφέλιμος διὰ τοῦ πάθους γένηται, ἐπειδὴ αὐτὸς ὑπὸ τῆς ἄγαν κακίας ἀνίατος ἦν· ἐσκλήρυνε δὲ αὐτὸν τῇ μακροθυμίᾳ καὶ τῇ τῆς τιμωρίας ἀναβόλῃ ἐπιτείνων αὐτοῦ τὴν κακίαν, ἵνα εἰς τὸν ἔσχατον ὅρον αὐξηθείσης αὐτοῦ τῆς πονηρίας, τὸ δίκαιον ἐπ' αὐτῷ τῆς θείας κρίσεως διαφανῇ· διὰ τοῦτο ἀπὸ μικροτέρων πληγῶν ἀεὶ προστιθεὶς, καὶ ἐπιτείνων τὰς μάστιγας, οὐκ ἐμάλαξεν αὐτοῦ τὸ ἀνυπότακτον, ἀλλ' εὔρισκεν αὐτὸν καὶ τῆς ἀνοχῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ καταφρονοῦντα καὶ τοῖς ἐπαγομένοις αὐτῷ δεινοῖς ὑπὸ τῆς συνηθείας ἐμμελετήσαντα· καὶ οὐδὲ οὕτως αὐτὸν παρέδωκε τῷ θανάτῳ, ἕως αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν ἐποίησεν ὑποβρόχιον ἐν τῇ ὑπερηφανίᾳ τῆς καρδίας αὐτοῦ, τῆς τῶν δικαίων πορείας καταλμήσας, καὶ νομίσας ὥσπερ τῷ λαῷ τοῦ Θεοῦ, οὕτω καὶ αὐτῷ βάσιμον ἔσεσθαι τὴν ἐρυθρὰν θάλασσαν.—S. Basil., Homil. ix de Diversis, tom. ii. p. 77.]

SERM. III.

the Apostle's saving method in such great cures to call in the devil into consultation, to deliver men up unto Satan as the last and surest remedy; the continued stripes and the no respite, to give the impenitent to drink of the *ἄκρατος κεκερασμένος*, in the Apocrypha[f], that hath so posed the interpreters, the unmixed mixed wine, the all myrrh but no water, the all manner of embittering, heightening, but none of the allaying, cooling mixtures in it, and so still the potion of our crucified Master, i. e. by the way of this text, all smitings and disciplining; real, corporeal inflictions of Satan, to the diseasing and destroying of the flesh, and it seems no popular empirical means so probable, for the *ἵνα πνεῦμα σωθῇ*, "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord."

[1 Cor. v. 5.]

[Rev. xiv. 10.]

And then, my brethren, to bring down this first particular unto ourselves, was there ever such a course of sour discipline, such a delivering up unto Satan, as this nation of ours hath for some years been under? Was there ever such real buffetings, not like that in St. Jerome's dream, to convert the Ciceronian into a Christian, but as upon a waking bedlam, a daily constant exercise of stripes, or like that on the possessed in the Gospel, the spirit taking us and tearing us till we foam again,—and our base reviling and slandering one another is that foam,—O how many sad falling fits hath this poor demoniac been wrestling under, and unless an overruling mercy interpose, perhaps the bitterest part of the agony still to come, in the struggling of life to return again! Is not this the antitype of a smitten Ephraim? I speak not this particularly of those that have been the sufferers under this rod; believe it, the catalogue of the smitten is larger than so: you may mark it that the rod itself is smitten whensoever it smites, at every blow wounded and torn by way of repassion.

[Luke ix. 39.]

And so the most distant atoms of this kingdom are once united in this one sad notion of stripes and wounds, fit to become one common *ἔξαρχος θρηνοῦ*, precentor in the first note of this sad anthem, the *flagellasti me*, "Thou hast smitten me." O that we could get but one word further, join all in the *ἀμοιβαῖον*, or counterpart, *et flagellatus sum*, in the real passive, and "I was smitten."

[f] [An evident mistake for Apocalypse.]

This were but justice unto God that hath taken all this pains with us, been at such an expense of coulters with these stony fallow hearts of ours. You shall see how rhetorically He expostulates it, "Will a lion roar in the forest to have no prey?" shall My chidings, and threats, and thunderbolts tearing your ephod and your altar, rending not the veil, but the temple itself from the top to the bottom, be spent all to no purpose? "Will a young lion give forth his voice from his den that he may take nothing?"—that is the best rendering of the place,—shall all this tragical scene designed and acted by God (all but our sin-parts in it) be but a beating of the air, or a scourging of the sea, unprofitably? no one sin in such a legion brought down, or vanquished by all this storming? Amos iii. 4.

Nay, shall we at once evacuate and reproach, frustrate and defame His methods? pronounce unto all the world that God hath lost His design for want of conduct? shall we set up for the master wits? get proselytes away from heaven to Ephraim's heresy? preach back again to God's rod, and tell Him that afflictions are very improper engines to make batteries on souls? If so, then we are just the *indomiti juvenci* in this text, so perfectly untamed after all this smiting; I wish we could say as true in that that follows, the "turn Thou us, and we shall be turned," that the resolvedness not to benefit by stripes were not so like the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, that when this hath failed, any other method might hope to prove successful. That prosperity might do it, was Ephraim's fancy, though distant enough from God's, which brings me to my second particular, man's judgment, or the sinner's persuasion of himself, that roses are more wholesome than wormwood, that prosperity will do it better, and a bribing God with a promise that it shall do it; *converte et convertar*, "turn," &c.

And this we shall not fully carry away with us, if we do not view it distinctly in three notions:

1. As it was a persuasion or act of belief in Ephraim, that so it would prove: "turn Thou me," &c.

2. As a promise that it should be thus: "turn" and "I will," &c.

3. As in truth it was, an excuse to get off the rod, or to

SERM. III.

procrastinate the repentance, the present method of smiting may be superseded, "turn Thou me," &c.

The first, an act of judgment in Ephraim. The second, of temporary resolution. The third, of artifice and design. In each of these Ephraim may chance to prove our mirror, it will be worth your patience that I shew you how. And

1. As it was a persuasion, or act of judgment in Ephraim, that prosperity was the way to make them better.

[Is. lv. 8.] It was a truth of God's own pronouncing, "that His thoughts are not like our thoughts," consented to by the philosopher,

οὔτι δέμας θνητοῖσιν ὁμοίϊος, οὔδε νόημα[g],

saith Xenophanes, "God hath no more of our fancies than of our shapes," heaven and earth are seldom of an opinion. It will be most pertinent and visible in matters of His providence.

When God hath designed the cross, the constant post and stage in our guesses to heaven, we must needs set up another economy, fancy it a kingdom of uncompounded felicities, crowd all the godly into one throne, and the ungodly into one footstool, bring Christ unto this earth again on a second more prudent errand, to have an age of reigning, not of suffering, among a world not of followers, but of fellow-kings, and so, in the Apostle's judgment, enclose Him in a kingdom of bastards, whom we are resolved, quite contrary to God's pronouncing, to be the only sons and saints of the millennium. To this end must prophecies be precipitated, and what belongs to the future (perhaps long ago past) conversion of the Jews, or our yet more future bliss, shall be all anticipated presently, the cross condemned and banished out of the world, and none like to be of the order of the new disciples, but he that will cast off that unchristian luggage, and so not follow Christ. Can there be a greater contrariety unto Christ's judgment, a more perfect antipodes to all that hath hitherto been gospel, than that which by pulling out one pin in the scene, hath been thus shifted into its stead?

[Phil. iv. 11.] And as in the general, so in the particular too, "In what state soever I am, therewith to be contented," is not to be

[g] [Xenophan. fr. i. ap. Steph. Poes. Philos. ed. 1573.]

had, by St. Paul's own confession, without a *μεμύημαι*, a great deal of mysterious instruction, such as in the *Eleusinia sacra* cost the client so many sighing patient years of attendance and purgation, before he could ascend to the *τελεταὶ* and *ἐποπτείαι*, "the heights of Christian contentment:" but especially to have any good opinion of afflictions, when they are actually on our shoulders, to be so tame as to think such a proportion of earth, with wormwood imbibed, can prove useful or medicinal to any. SERM. III.

Will not a brave golden shower of cordials dispel poisons, raise a collapsed habit of soul, infuse a new stock of spirits, more probably far than a course of steel or quicksilver? Would not an army of sun-beams, that have light as well as warmth in them, subdue and thaw the most hardened heart in the whole quarry, dissolve the most icy crystal spirit better than a stroke of Moses' rod, or a crack of thunder?

Thus hard it is for flesh and blood to believe that God can choose best for us: "Are not Abanah and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Jordan? May not I wash there and be clean?" Would not a little kind usage, a few fatherly kisses and embraces, an inheritance, or portion given me in my hand, a fair demesne to keep hospitality upon, be more likely to work upon well-natured sinners, that do not love to be forced, will be as thankful as any man living, if they may be courteously treated, but "with a froward handling cannot choose but shew themselves unsavoury?" This driving and forcing men to repentance, is a violation of the gospel-liberty, a kind of constraining and violencing of the spirit, if it be enslaved to these beggarly rudiments of stripes and terrors, and savours much of the spirit of legal fear, that "Hagar or mount Sinai, that engendereth unto bondage," quite contrary to the free-born Sion, or Jerusalem spirit, "whereby we cry Abba, Father." [2 Kings v. 12.] [Gal. iv. 24.] [Rom. viii. 15.]

Further yet, I have heard Ephraim a murmuring as well as a bemoaning, I am so encumbered with the pressures of a villainous world, such a hurry of passion, of indignation and impatience, of a tumultuous grief and shame, that I have neither heart, nor joy, nor leisure to mend any thing. Thus it follows, ver. 19, "I am ashamed and confounded, because

SERM. III.

I bear the reproach of my youth;" no possible reforming in such a state of confusion, such a kind of Tophet and hell as this.

And I heartily wish I did not speak to men that can think Ephraim in the right all this while, that with Jonas on the withering of the gourd can justify against God Himself, that "they do well to be angry even unto death," that can really persuade themselves that afflictions are not for their turn, that they are as noxious to their souls as to their bodies, that as Hippocrates resolved of the Scythians, that the *κέδματα*, if they came from God, that all the curses and ill-turns that Heaven had to spare, would be confined to the poor, because their wants set them always a murmuring, and a blaspheming of God: so, I say, I wish we had not some of that atheist's conceit, that cannot tell how to imagine that stripes should bring forth any thing but clamours and execrations, more ferity, more sullen atheisms, more bestiality to drown, opiate potions to benumb the sense of our calamities; and many of us do this out of pure judgment that affluence is far the more probable way toward mending, that a Canaan were able to inspire Israelites, as the good soil in Plutarch was thought to infuse poetry into the oracle: and having experience to demonstrate the first part of Ephraim's speech, being no more wrought on by all God's smiting, than the most untractable steers, they go on with a presumption of the truth of the second, "that prosperity will do all that adversity hath not done: turn Thou me," &c.

[Jonah iv. 9.]

But then 2. I told you there was a second notion of these words, as they are an act of promise and temporary resolution, that "if God will but turn our captivity, we will infallibly amend."

And it is very possible at a distance for a man to think himself in earnest when he so promises: it was Dio's observation of Nero's mother,—that professed herself content to be killed by her son, on condition he might be emperor[h],—that it is very ordinary at a distance to enter such obligations; we will venture any the sorest payment from Satan after this life, so we may get but his kingdom of the earth, his seraglio of carnal felicities at the instant. The hypocrite

[h] [Dion. Cass. Hist., lib. lxi. cap. 2.]

or false-hearted professor will make any bargains with God for the future, will not doubt but to be a disciple of Christ, so he may but first "go and bury his father," or with Jephtha's daughter, "have a month or two to go up and down the mountains, and bewail her virginity; she and her fellows:" be it the cloister or the altar, chastity, or death itself, as you know it is not resolved which it was that that vow belonged to, a little present felicity will be sufficient payment for either of them; only when the date of the undertaken returning begins to commence, when the sore part of the bargain comes to be performed, the Nero to kill as well as to reign, the cloister, to be actually entered, and with that the ἀμεταμέλητος μετάνοια, a vow never to return *ad sæculum* again, then the votary begins to understand himself better, finds it as improper to turn penitentiary in a palace as it was in a prison, as irrational to be condemned to Tantalus' as to Prometheus' fate, to be abstemious in a river of delights as patient of fastening to a mountain of torments: and had he known it, that he should thus have been taken at his word, have had his turning required as soon as his captivity was turned, his mortification expected at the restoring of his peace, and with the festivity and rest, the holiness also and services of a sabbath and jubilee, he would have even courted his rod, embraced his pleasanter gyves, or dunghill, have continued a slave in Egypt, rather than thus be circumcised in Canaan; have been bored through the ear by his old master, rather than thus dignified with the title of freeman, and denied the libertinism that belongs to it.

[Matt. viii. 21.] [Judg. xi. 37, 38.]

But the truth is, there is a third notion of these words, which will be a *supersedeas* to that of a promise, and that is, as this art of promising is only an excuse, or shift, or pretence to get off the present smart of the rod, or the importunity of the prophet to escape the smiting, or the being smitten, the cross or following of Christ.

Should the unmanaged horse, instead of the bullock in the text, desire his rider to put off his spurs and whip, and at once to ease him both of bit and saddle, and then promise to be the tractablest beast in nature, but till then profess that all those instruments of discipline should never tame him, I beseech you, what would be thought of this oration? would

SERM. III.

you certainly be persuaded that the beast spake reason, that it was a serious design of a generous obedience, a gallantry of a voluntary unconstrained virtue? If so, you may believe the beast within you, that makes the same proposal to God, and you. In the mean time it will not be amiss to resolve, that he that hath exceptions to God's methods, hath some other master to whom he is more inclinable to retain; he that will not serve God for nought, that is all for the thriving piety, the gainful godliness, that must have his reward just as he is a doing the work, a payment in hand even before he sets about the duty, will sure bring in little profit to God be he fed never so high, very thin returns of good life for all his donatives. He that will not now mend under the rod, edify by so many doleful lectures as have been read us out of a Zachary's and a Jeremy's roll, that hath arrived to Theodoret's *νοῦν ἀντίτυπον*, a mind that can reverberate judgments, and make them rebound, in more provoking sins against the hand that sent them, is of the Pharaoh, the anvil-temper, and, let him pretend, or promise, or flatter himself what he please, by holding out his white flag for treaty, he desired to be in case to maintain his fort still against God, and it is not victualling, and bribing, but starving and storming, must help to drive him out of it: which brings me to the third and last particular,

[Zech. v. 1.] [Jer. xxxvi. 2.]

The stating of this difficulty betwixt God and man, and in it the falseness of man's judgment and fallaciousness of such his promise, both in respect of God, who will never send them prosperity that adversity wrought no good on, and of prosperity itself, which would never do the work if God should send it.

For the first, in respect of God, who will never send them prosperity, that adversity wrought no good on. This you may judge of, not only by that great rule of state in heaven of "God's resisting the proud," and "surely God heareth not sinners," compounded into one gospel aphorism, "the incorrigible beggar can never have audience in heaven, nor returns from thence, save only of stones and thunderbolts," but especially on that wise ground of divine economy on which all these stripes are sent.

[1 Pet. v. 5.] [John ix. 31.]

God's first method of calling us off from the world, is the

SERM. III.

soft and friendly, the "having therefore these promises, let us cleanse ourselves," a heaven, a paradise, and a Canaan, to confirm angels, and bring men to bliss, to draw with the cords of a man, with the bands of love; and if that prevail, afflictions are superseded,—and were it not that there is another special use of them, to illustrate our Christian virtues, and improve our crown, and withal to confute Satan when he accuses us of insincerity, the reformed Christian should never be thus exercised. But when prosperity will not work, when the calmer physic is digested into nourishment of the disease, then, and not till then, the vomit comes in on the reserve, the tempest and deluge to drown those serpents that had engendered and thriven in the shallow and still waters, as to them that are sick of perfumes the noisomest smell is the only cordial: and then, as Cusanus[i] observes, there is in God *coincidentia contrariorum*, this severity is the only mercy, these wounds the only balsam, the hostile approach the most obliging charity; and as by the heathen artifice in Hero's πνευματικὰ, as soon as ever the fire was kindled upon the altar, the plummets fell, and the doors flew open, and the god appeared upon the chair of state; so by this rarifying power of flames and judgments the earthly obstacles are oft removed, and the deity set up and enthroned in the heart; and then sure it was good for that man that he was in trouble. And generally the rule is true in Gerson, *Omnes pœnæ non exterminantes sunt medicinales*, all mulcts that are not undoing, and our law admits not of any but such as are *salvo contenemento*, are a piece of charity and physic in the judge. For this cause are many sick and weak, nay many fallen asleep, if we will believe the Apostle, and all these judgings of the Lord the only antidotes against that fatal poison, the being condemned and ruined with the world.

[2 Cor. vii. 1.] [Hos. xi. 4.] [Ps. cxix. 71.] [1 Cor. xi. 30.]

And then you will not blame the wit or piety of the old heathens, who deified all their benefactors, that they had temples for such fevers as these, the friends that had so obliged them; I am sure St. Augustine makes it his wonder that upon that score they had not erected one altar more, *impietati hostium*, to the impiety and rapine of their enemies,

[i] [De Conjecturis, lib. ii. cap. 1. p. 94.]

SERM. III.

which was constantly, if they had but the grace to make use of it, so royal a benefactor.

The sovereign power of this receipt being thus considered, you will give it leave to be the last in God's prescribing, and the most depended on; and the patient being not fit for the cost or trouble of any further experiments, when these have proved successless, the greatest mercy of the physician is to leave him with these cupping glasses at the neck, that if there be ever a spark of vital spirit within, it may by this assistance discharge itself of that poisonous vapour, and yet possibly overcome and quit the danger, but if not, it is sure too late to divert to any new course; the fetching out the cordials will but enhance the bill, and maintain the lamp a little longer, will never beget a new stock of spirits, or spring of life, when it is once so quite exhausted; and therefore the conclusion is clear, and the prophet Amos hath expressed it by an apt resemblance, "Shall one take up a snare from the earth, and take nothing at all?" Shall God remove His judgments from a nation, while the sins are still at the high water? Infallibly He will not do it: if He do, it is a sad presage; His soft hand is but absolute desertion, the leaving to ourselves is the giving us up to our bloodiest enemies, that unseasonable heaven is the far worse Tophet of the twain.

Amos iii. 5.

Let but the present calamities work the cure on us, and then all the Canaans in the world are ready at hand to perfect it, the old peaceable flourishing England, hid under that heap of thunderbolts, is ready to be our bath and *palæstra* once again, to refresh and confirm what was thus acquired, and to beget a whole treasure of health in us; but till then, prosperity is quite beside the purpose, a mere ignorant empiric prescription which hath nothing of purging or medicinal in it, should it be administered, it would never reform or convert any; the demonstrating of which is the undertaking of the last minute of my last particular, that in respect of prosperity itself, which in this case will never do the work if God should send it.

The beast that is not tamed or humbled by the whip or goad, the rich pasture in all reason will never break or work on. The liberty of that field is a new temptation, and the plenty strengthens for a sturdier resistance, and both liberty

and plenty, respite and peace are apt to be mistaken for a reward of the former stubbornnesses, far from any restraint of them.

Will you see it exemplified in the most eminent stories of deliverances and prosperities that the Scriptures take notice of? that will enforce the conclusion *a majori*.

You have Lot of Sodom, and Noah of the old world, the remnant preserved from that double deluge of fire and water, and as soon as they are landed in their fair havens, the same calm shipwrecks both, and their prosperity is branded by holy writ for the mother of their two bestial sins, incest and drunkenness. [Gen. xix. 33, 35.] [Gen. ix. 21.]

Look back from thence into Eden, and there that happy at once and innocent pair, are not by plenty secured from coveting; beauty, and sweetness, and desire of knowledge, the perfections and temptations of paradise, are the ruin to innocence itself; and then what do you think the swine would have done there, when the lambs committed such early riots? what an havoc would an army of roysters have made in that garden, where Adam himself (if you will believe the Rabbins' rendering of the Psalmist's לא ילין) "abode not one night in that state of bliss and honour?"

Pass we from paradise unto heaven itself, where there is neither eating nor drinking, marrying nor giving in marriage, and so no room for carnal sins to do any thing but starve in, yet even there was matter for the filthiness of the spirit to feed on; the angels can grow proud and ambitious there, stumble and fall in plain heaven; adore and worship (and so damn) themselves in the absence of all other idols. And therefore from these experiments it would be no boast or hyperbole to affirm, and perhaps worth your pains to consider it, that if a profane impenitent should, upon an impossible supposition, be so prosperous as to enter heaven itself, it would be very far from reforming or converting him; such a gratifying and rewarding of sinners would but confirm them in their course; as when an habituate demure adulterer, oppressor, or the like, gets confident of his salvation, with these crimes unreformed about him, there is not an engine imaginable to fetch him off from his sins, but by first robbing him of his assurance; he must be thrown out of his [Luke xx. 35.]

SERM. III.

imaginary usurped heaven, before he will be really capable of coming thither. It is true there will be there in those sacred courts some good motives and attractives to reformation, examples of all the contrary virtues, if he were malleable enough to be controlled by such; the seraphim's pure divine flames of love, to reproach and upbraid his profane unclean fires of lust and rage; a quiet calm subordination of saints and angels under that great theocracy, to shame that petulancy of his ὁ δῆμος, the irregularity of his rebel lusts against the νοῦς αὐτοκράτωρ, the monarchy of that divine beam within him; the principalities and powers, to make him blush and glow at those vile servilities and mean submissions to the paltry sins that he stands guilty of; a whole volume of patterns of all holiness in every saint, to reproach and libel his impurities: but when he hath in himself that one great example, that lust and pride, the filthiness of the flesh and spirit can inherit life, as suppose the impenitent in heaven, and he hath this example, he will then rather expect to be imitated himself, to gain proselytes to his delicate popular thriving heresy, to set up a new faction or society in heaven, all for prosperous liberty, than conform to that old regular subordination, that prelacy or hierarchy of archangels, and cherubims, and saints. In a word, we should have in such a new supposed platform, more hope to bring over and debauch angels, were they not confirmed, than danger of being disciplined or reformed by them; even raise Lucifer's expectation, that he might return to his old country again, at least give him more ground for that hope than Origen's charitable heresy could ever afford him; and all this though impossible enough, yet far more probable than for unclean atheists or hypocrites, remaining such, to enter into the kingdom of heaven, and then begin to reform when they are entered.

That divinity that first instates impenitents in pardon, and so in bliss, and then will have them mend by way of gratitude, supposes a degree of piety and generosity in those impenitents that nothing but a thorough conversion can plant in them. He that having a false graceless debtor to deal withal, will first absolutely cancel his bond, and then expect that payment from gratitude which law and sergeants could not extort from him, shall be allowed to be of Ephraim's

mind, that the sunbeams may dissolve that stone that the hammer could not. The Platonists and the papists have been a little more rational in ordering their fancies, placing their imaginary purgatory in their way to heaven not at the journey's end: and, if you mark it, they are not purgatory streams, but flames which they dream of, a *caldarium*, or scalding bath, or furnace, to fetch out and burn up dross, not a flowery Elysian field or paradise, only to upbraid it.

I shall make challenge to your memories and experiences, did you ever see any man flattered and gratified out of his sins by the increase and amiableness of his temptations? And yet it is certain that prosperity, and ease, and peace abound more with these than any other state, *acrioribus stimulis animum explorant*, in Tacitus[k], and as he, *felicitate corrumpimur;* so "because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God," could David say, their uninterrupted felicities first made atheists of them: is it likely that a few more hours of those joys would return them saints? [Ps. lv. 19.]

The eremites indeed in Theodosius the younger's time, left their solitude, and came to study perfection in the king's palace; but sure it was because they were (or else conceived themselves to be) advanced and arrived already to a spiritual height, to a full pancratic habit, fit for combats and wrestlings, and so came out to practise in these *agones*, that is, not because there were conceived to be less, but more temptations: and yet even for such, I should not be overforward to commend the design. Without question the still privacy had been the more prudent course. For so Licetus, that tells us of some lamps which under ground continued light for sixteen hundred years, concludes his observation, that as soon as ever they were brought forth into open air they went out immediately. And I need not tell you how many zealous-burning or fair-shining votaries the world hath had, whose imprisoned, retired, cloistered piety hath done so too.

And do not think that it is an appetite to other men's possessions, or an insidious praising of a lost treasure, that so they that have taken it up may return it again, if I tell you that which it is not these times have taught me, that affluence

[k] [Secundæ res acrioribus stimulis animos explorant: quia miseriæ tolerantur, felicitate corrumpimur.—Tac. Hist. i. 15.]

SERM. III.

and abundance of riches, of ease, of even peace itself, is generally no safe commodity; there is not one of a hundred but is less Christian for it. Jeshurun waxed fat, began to thrive in the fair pasture, and, it follows, he kicked presently. And it is Aristotle's maxim, πλοῦτος ὑβριστικοὺς ποιεῖ[l], 'riches make men insolent' and intolerable. Nay we have mention of the πολλοὶ τὸν κόρον οὐ δυνάμενοι φέρειν, and of *ferre fortunam*[m] in Horace. It is a weight that many are not able to move under, the talents of gold are the saddest lading, ready to sink old Charon's boat in Lucian. It is sure that very bunch in the camel's back that made it so hard for him to enter that strait passage; and unless you have some confidence and some experience of your extraordinary gifts, or faculty of conquering the temptations of wealth and rest, particularly of taking out the sting and teeth that are peculiar to that serpent, the exact skill of allaying this quicksilver, believe me that piece of ancient advice would be no unsafe counsel to many of us, when riches increase, instead of setting the heart on them, not so much as to lend them an ear, to be deaf to the knocks of riches, when they are most importunate at the door. All the joys and high tastes that they can help you to, being not able to requite you for the damning sin of one insolence, one luxury, one impiety, nay for the pains that not only Petrarch but Aristotle, the heathen as well as Christian moralist, tells you it will cost the rich or idle man to resist those temptations, much less to repair the wound of a wasted conscience, that the courting of wealth when it is shy or coy, the βούλεσθαι πλουτεῖν, the resolving to become rich, or continue so, doth constantly cost us.

[Deut. xxxii. 15.]

Esther xvi. 2.

[Ps. lxii. 10.]

[1 Tim. vi. 9.]

This is the most perfect earnest in the world; never was there Christian of any extraordinary proficiency, but was resolved of it as of a principle, and therefore put it into his prayers, not only under the petition against leading into temptation, but interpreted his daily bread to that sense, τὸν τῇ ἑκάστῃ οὐσίᾳ ἡμῶν ἁρμόζοντα, that which is most agreeable to every of our conditions, the neither poverty nor riches, with Solomon, but the *panem dimensi nostri*, that which is just even to the wants or cravings of a regular appetite, which is the only wholesome diet in the world.

[Prov. xxx. 8.]

[l] [Arist. Rhet. ii. 16.]

[m] [Hor. Od. iii. 27. 75.]

SERM. III.

And as this hath sufficiently demonstrated the doctrine, so will it prove the most advantageous rise for use and application, and the conclusion of the whole matter. And that is in the Prophet Micah's phrase, to "shew thee, O man, what is good:" good to thee as thou art a man, in all thy capacities, to put thee upon a project, give thee a patent and monopoly of the greatest treasure and riches of the world, a secret that the worldling hath not known; for had he known it, he would never have disquieted the neighbourhood for such a warm prize snatched just out of the mint, such a singeing weight of gold that will so soon fire its passage, and fly from him again. And it is that treasure of Christ, shall I say? nay, of Epicurus' philosophy,—as, for want of his own writings, the Greek scholiasts on Aristotle are fain to tell us. In the one, the *γαληνὸν καὶ ἀτάραχον τῆς ψυχῆς κατάστημα*, the calm, untroubled constitution of mind, that all the *τὰ ἔξω*, the present or possible tempests of this world,—which are all extrinsical, perfectly extrinsical to a Christian,—have not had in their power to afflict or disquiet, to put out of that magnanimous pace of equable constant piety: in the other, that, not effect or fruit of faith, but faith itself, *ἡ πίστις νίκη*, "Faith the victory and triumph over the world," using it as a tame conquered captive creature, contemning and defying it, and against all our tempters vindicating and maintaining that title of ours, which the blood of Christ helped to purchase for us, that of superiority and conquest over the world. Not only that of contentment with a little, a tame privative contentment,—which yet the Spaniard thinks fit to make rival with Jupiter, enough, when it is attained on earth, to get away all the love and value from heaven,—but of preferring the conveniences and advantages of that little,—nay, that admirably-valuable condition of the nothing at all,—the quiet and dignity of being fed immediately from God's own hand, of being a special part of His solicitude, nay, of rejoicing in tribulations, the glorifying and magnifying God in that behalf beyond all others, and so being as in a state of ascendancy still, a yet more glorious condition, that of being under God's managery and discipline, a part not only of His retinue, but His skill, a piece of His craft and workmanship, hewed and squared and carved by those keen sharp instruments of

[Mic. vi. 8.]

1 John v. 4.

SERM. III.

His, to become so many *ἀγάλματα Θεοῦ*, 'incarnate statues of His divinity.' And I beseech you to tell me, is this a formidable condition? is not that of the prosperous atheist far more formidable? Tell me as men, as Christians, and not only as cattle of the herd; look but upon it with those eyes that hope one day to behold the face of God,—and "he that hath this hope must purify himself,"—and pronounce if there be any thing in the smitten Ephraim's fate, beside Ephraim's sins, that may discompose or terrify a servant of such a master, much less drive us into tempests and rages of fear, with oaths and curses, and damning of ourselves, that we know not that Christ that would lead us or bring us into this condition; a condition (look it never so sadly) which (believe me, or believe your Saviour upon His mount, His pulpit, or but believe your own souls, whenever you come to try it) shall prove a mine of comfort to you, even in this life, the true fountain, from whence the old *ἡδονικοὶ*, the voluptuous or pleasurable, drew but drops or lappings, but will yield the illuminate Christian full streams of all the real joy and epicurism in the world.

[1 John iii. 2, 3.]

Which as it shall be the sum of my present address to you, so of my prayers to God for ever for you, that He that knows best how to choose for us, will not suffer us to do it for ourselves, will answer the necessities of our health, and not the importunities of our appetites, that He will take our soul's part against our enemy flesh, and not our bodies, our estates, our satans against our souls; will teach us that patience and that joy, that tranquillity and that serenity, that courage and that anthem of his three martyr-children, that we may sing also in the midst of flames; denudate us of all when that may fit us for our prizes; prescribe us any the scorchingest furnace here, which shall prove most instrumental to our present reformation and future bliss, to our life of obedience here, and of glory hereafter: which God of His infinite mercy grant us all, for His Son Jesus Christ His sake; to whom with the Father, &c.

SERMON IV.

JOHN BAPTIST'S WARNING.

MATT. iii. 2.

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Two difficulties there are in these few words; what is meant by the kingdom of heaven, and what by repentance; and then one plain matter of practical divinity that results from the union of them. The difficulties must be explained, or else the doctrine will not be come by; the earth removed, ere the ore be sprang; the veil be rent, and then the oracle will appear.

The former, what is the importance of the kingdom of heaven, as being more disputable, I shall propose more civilly and tenderly and unconcernedly, as willing to give an example of that meekness and that charity that in matters of opinion will keep a Christian from noise or quarrel: but the latter, being more practical, to which your eternal weal is more closely consequent,—a little mistake in repentance being like the losing of a pin in a watch, the actions and motions of the whole life, even the success of every temporal enterprize or hope, depending on it,—you must give me leave to be more dogmatical, to affirm confidently, and, if need be, contend and quarrel you out of such errors. To begin with the first difficulty.

The kingdom of heaven in this place, I conceive to have a peculiar critical sense, different from what belongs to it in many other places; and to signify the destruction of the Jews, that remarkable vast *πανωλεθρία*, or small subversion of that Church and state, wherein the power and so king-

SERM. IV.

dom of Christ was most illustriously visible against His persecutors. And if you must have the reasons of my conceit, I will give you a taste of them.

First, the parallel use of the phrase in some other places; not to trouble you with many. In Luke xxi., where our Saviour having mentioned the beginnings of sorrows, *ἀρχὰς ὠδίνων*, beginnings of their throes of travail, and prolusions of this so bloody day,—"Jerusalem encompassed with armies," and the prodigies that should be observable about that time, "the signs in the sun and moon," &c., ver. 25, parallel to the relations in Hegesippus and Josephus, and predictions in Joel, "the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon," &c.,—he then concludes in the words of this text, "When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." [ver. 28.]

[Joel ii. 31.]

A second argument you may take from the Preacher, the Baptist, whose office it was to warn the Jews of this destruction, as you may see Mal. iv. 5, 6; "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet," i. e. John Baptist a prophesying, "before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, and he shall turn the hearts of the fathers," &c., directly the sermon of repentance, conversion in my text, "lest I come and smite the earth,"—*τὴν γῆν* הארץ, i. e. in the Scripture phrase, peculiarly the land of Judea,—"with a curse;" the clear interpretation of this kingdom.

A third argument you may have from the consequents in this text, where the Baptist saith it over again to the Pharisees in other words, the *μέλλουσα ὀργὴ*, "the wrath ready to come," and the "axe laid to the root of the trees:" and so it seems this kingdom was a heavy, slaughtering, hewing kingdom.

[Matt. iii. 7, 10.]

And so indeed the propriety of the word will bear,—which will serve for a fourth argument,—there being two notions of a kingdom; the one as it signifies reigning, the other as executing judgment; the first ruling, second coercing or punishing; the first the golden sceptre, the second the iron rod; that *διάκονος Θεοῦ*, royal "officer of God," being *ἔκδικος εἰς ὀργὴν*, "an avenger or executioner for punishment." And for the matter in hand the case is most clear; Christ was never so demonstrably a King as in that royal act of revenge upon His crucifiers; then was His standard set up, His en-

Rom. xiii. [4.]

sign displayed, the sign of the Son of Man appearing in heaven; "and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." SERM. IV. Matt. xxiv. 30.

Once more, there is but one interpretation of this kingdom of heaven that can pretend against that which we have now given you, and that is, that it should signify the preaching of the gospel, which at John Baptist's sermon was not yet present, but ἤγγικε, "was at hand." But how could that be the thing meant, when Christ Himself—who was this King, and His preaching this kingdom—doth still continue the same style? "Jesus began to preach and say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" the other kingdom was already come in Jesus' preaching, but still this kingdom is to come, yet future, though it were at hand. Yea, and when the Apostles were sent out a preaching, which sure was the presence of that kingdom, the same style was still continued by them, ἤγγικεν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς, "the kingdom of God is at hand upon you," and then immediately, to give the interpretation of that kingdom, they shake off the dust against them, a direful ceremony, "and it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city," the destruction that Sodom met with was more supportable than this. [Matt. iii. 2.] Matt. iv. 17. Luke x. 9. ver. 12.

I will now flatter myself that I have given you some hints (and it is in kindness to my auditory that I do no more) to acknowledge it not improbable that the kingdom of heaven may have a peculiar separate notion in this and some other few places, from that which it ordinarily signifies, and so denote the fatal final day to the Jews, and that will give our Baptist a preacher of repentance, just as Jonas and Noah were, God's economy the same, and the style but little changed. "Repent, for within an hundred and twenty years the world shall be drowned," was the sum of Noah's sermon; "Repent, for within forty days Nineveh shall be destroyed," was Jonah's sermon; and "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand," —within the compass of this generation shall Jerusalem be destroyed,—was the Baptist's, the Christ's, the Apostle's sermon. And so I have done with my first difficulty. Gen. vi. 3. [Jonah iii. 4.] [Matt. iii. 2; xxiv. 34.]

The second will not detain or importune you so long, what is here meant by repent: it is in a word the amending of our lives, that μετάνοια ἀπὸ νεκρῶν ἔργων, repentance not for, Heb. vi. 1.

SERM. IV.

but from dead works, the giving over the sins of the former life. The versicles before our Confession in the front of our liturgy have directed and authorized this interpretation, "Amend your lives," &c., and all other languages agree in this divinity; μετάνοια in Greek, 'a change of mind;' תשובה, in Hebrew, 'returning' or 'conversion;' *resipiscentia* in Latin, a 'return' to our wits again; and reformation or amendment of lives in English.

Having thus passed through the rougher part of your task of patience, seen what is most probably meant by the approaching kingdom of heaven, and what undoubtedly by repentance,—the first of which hath brought home the text very near the present condition of this kingdom: blessed Lord, that the latter might bring us home proselytes unto the text!—there is but one syllable left behind to exercise you, and that is the "for" betwixt this kingdom and this repentance, and the importance of it comprehends these two things: 1. That repentance is the only proper use of such direful denunciations, it is the only design of God's threats to extort repentance from us; the same Baptist that denounces the approach of the bloody slaughtering kingdom, requires repentance of his auditory; "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." 2. That repentance is the only way of averting that that is now at hand, and will otherwise undoubtedly invade them, "Repent, for it is at hand."

You see the double aspect of the μετανοεῖτε, "repent:" one upon the βασιλεία, the "kingdom;" the other upon the ἤγγικε, "it is at hand:" the double propriety of this grace, first, as the use of the doctrine, secondly, as the means to avert the judgment; to answer God's importunity, and to deprecate His wrath: a duty of justice to Him, and of prudence to ourselves: an aphorism of divinity and policy too, they will both come seasonably to our wants. We had need to make better use of the impendency of God's judgments, than, God knows, hitherto we have made; and we had need to find out some stronger antidote, some more approved ἀλεξιτήριον, than hitherto we have taken: the Baptist's "for" will be instrumental to you for each of them. I begin first with the first, that repentance is the only proper use of such direful denunciations.

SERM. IV.

And that I must infer through these two steps or degrees: First, that no other use is sufficient but repentance; and then that no repentance is sufficient but the μετάνοια, 'the change,' which is here defined.

First, no other use sufficient but repentance.

To pass by those so frequent, but abominable, uses which are made of these present calamities; in one, a supine stupidity, a constant wretchlessness, an intermitting all the duties of our callings till the times be better, and so making it impossible without a second miracle, that peace should prove peace, i. e. bring prosperity after it: in a second, the relieving his melancholic thoughts with a cup of Lethe, a sleeping pill of good fellowship, calling to the ocean to drown, when the hills will not be so kind as to fall upon him; like Saul sending to the minstrel, when the evil spirit came upon him; or like his second address, that to the witch,—for such is the cup wherein he divineth,—to charm the judgment that is ready to invade him: in a third, the multiplying of sins as fast as God multiplies judgments, like the elephants by the blood of the mulberries in the Maccabees, the more enraged in our θεομαχίαι, our fightings against God, by the bloodiness of the spectacle before us, advancing even to profaneness and atheism, like the emperor that, instead of reforming or trembling, would thunder back against Jupiter; all which I cannot compare better than to the effect of the famous plague in Thucydides[a], that saith he, "was pestilential to their souls as well as bodies, made them θηριώδεις and ἀγρίους, swept away civility and humanity as well as men, left nothing but ferity and savageness among them." To omit these,—which sure are no sufficient use, none of that καιρῷ δουλεύειν, "serving the time," which can be mistaken for Κυρίῳ, "serving the Lord,"—many other uses there are, with which men are willing to content themselves; many inferior vulgar graces the devil can allow us to be taught by these calamities, if by that means he may keep us off from this one grand necessary of repentance. When the whale approaches the ship, it is the mariner's stratagem to throw him out a barrel or two to sport with, to keep him from that nobler game he came for, the tossing and drowning the ship. When Xerxes was in danger

[1 Sam. xvi. 23.] [1 Sam. xxviii. 8.] [1 Maccab. vi. 34.]

[a] [Thuc. ii. 52, 53.]

SERM. IV.

in the tempest, Herodotus[b] tells us of his nobles, *προσκυνέοντας ἐκπηδέειν ἐς τὴν θάλασσαν*, "they made their obeisance and leaped overboard to save their prince's life." And so when the Leviathan in the text, a devouring denunciation makes toward us, that naturally delights in that charitable cruelty, the tossing and drowning the sinner-part of the man and state, wounding the vessel through the ribs, shipwrecking the affections, the lusts, the reigning sin, the heathen prince, the devil in it,—that grand important work, that joy of such angels or messengers of heaven, that (to them so delightful) game of repentance,—some lower meaner vessels we have to cast out to it, some inferior contents to sacrifice, some nobles to leap overboard, some very virtues and graces we can have our great pilot Satan's leave to retribute to these storms, these denunciations, so the body of reigning sin may be kept unshipwrecked, so that fatal work of repentance may not be required of us.

One or two not inconsiderable graces these times may already have wrought in the most of us. In one man perhaps contempt of the world, having by our present miseries learned so much of the contemptibleness of it, and by the world's contemning and affronting of us, had provocations to all returns of contumely and revenge on a villanous world; and he that upon such unworthy usage, such barbarous, reproachful, incensing behaviour, can but hold up a slight quarrel with this petulant enemy, charge it with some unkindness, and in that pet break off that strict league of friendship, vow never to love the unkind, treacherous, false world so well again, persuades himself he hath made a most excellent sanctified use of these times. I confess I am glad to see such quarrels, glad that any thing can allay that mad passion, that *λιθομανία*, as Isidore calls it, that fury of love and doting on our earthen gods, glad that they that have been so long tormented in their own galleys, *suo calculo damnati ad metalla*, by their own tyrannical covetous minds condemned to that old Roman punishment, a digging and hewing in the minerals for ever, are by the bounty of these ill times returned from their thraldom, their captivity before their year of jubilee, expelled from these galleys, banished out of this in-

[b] [Herod. viii. 118.]

quisition, glad that the world's forsaking of us can work any degree of cure on our fits of spleen, our hypochondriac passions to the world. It is possible that the man thus dispossessed of his own familiar may at length have hospitable thoughts for some nobler guests, that the ill usage from the harlot may bring the spouse into favour again, that the sense of the ill master that we have drudged under so long, may make us seek out some more gainful service, that the unprosperousness of the arm of flesh, the several failings of the second causes which we have idolized so often, the many delusions and ill successes we meet with in the world, may make some forsake those atheistical colours, and bring in proselytes to heaven, and so this contempt of the world may be a piece of proœmial piety, an usher or baptist to repentance; but till it be thus improved and built upon, till this excellent piece of philosophy be, as Clemens saith of the pagan school, *τελειουμένη διὰ Χριστοῦ*, baptized by that Baptist, christianized by the addition of repentance, till the thorns that are now in the flesh enter to the pricking and wounding of the heart, to the letting out all worldly trusts and airy hopes out of it, till he that is fallen out with this world, and his Egyptian master there, come with him in the gospel unto Christ in quest after the blessed heavenly Master, "running, and kneeling, and asking, Good Master what shall I do" to get my portion in another world? and pursue Christ's directions to the utmost in that design; that contemner of the world must still know, he hath not yet taken out the Baptist's copy, not made such use of the doctrine of the rod as is expected from him, he is not yet advanced so far as to John's baptism, to that *ἐν ὀλίγῳ Χριστιανὸς*, the so much as almost a Christian, which the Baptist could have made him. O then let him go on to the perfection of the text, not satisfy himself with that use of it.

[Mark x. 17.]

[Acts xix. 3.]

[Acts xxvi. 28.]

In another perhaps the complexion of the times hath had a yet nobler influence, inspired him with a perfect valour, an athletic habit of soul, a contempt of life itself, brought him to a dreadless approach of that supreme terror, and that not only the martial man, whose calling is to beard that lion, but even the soft courtier, who had imbibed no such bold principles; it is now no news to hear death kindly treated.

SERM. IV.

We can think of death as of a preferment, of the grave as one of the greatest dignities in the Church, and not only ἐπαινεῖν, but μακαρίζειν, bless this enemy,—when we have not so much meekness or charity for any other,—count them happiest and blessedest that come earliest to it. Each discontented Jonah hath his "Take, I beseech thee, my life from me;" the whole kingdom is become wilderness, a many prickly juniper-trees scattered every where in that wilderness, and an Elijah sat down under every one of those juniper-trees, "a sighing out his request for himself, that he may die; It is enough now, O Lord, take away my life:" and I see this passeth with some for a special piety and mortification; which let me tell you, considered aright, is an act of the sullenest atheism, a felonious intent against themselves, which because (like Saul) they are too cowardly to execute with their own hands, God must supply the armour-bearer's place, be called in to do it for them. But I am not so uncharitable to think that all our thoughts of kindness to death are the congelations of such black melancholic vapours; it is, I hope, in some an obedience to Plato's precept, the πειρᾶσθαι εὐσχημονεῖν, the endeavouring to behave one's-self comely in whatever fortune, a Christian submission to God's will in either of the δοῖοι πίθοι, which way soever the economy of providence disposes us, even as far as to death itself, no hatred or satiety of life, but an indifference to either lot, the hating life only as we are commanded to hate our parents, not with an absolute, but comparative hatred,—the denotation of the Hebrew שנא,—only choosing the rest, preferring the dormitory, the being asleep in Christ, in paradise with Christ, rather than to be in those uneasy postures, laborious marches, that a hill on earth provides for us; and then I shall commend your righteous judgment, but yet still not flatter you, that this is a sufficient use of this Baptist's sermon, of the present impendency of God's punishments. Thou mayst not only be content, but wish to die and be with Christ, which is far better, more desirable even to the carnal man, most gladly exchange the torments of a brittle life for the joys of an eternity, and yet not have deposited the lust and basenesses of this nauseated life: the former is but an act of the judicative faculty, a conclusion that such premises once considered cannot choose

[Jonah iv. 3.]

[1 Kings xix. 4.]

[1 Sam. xxxi. 4.]

[Luke xiv. 26.]

[Phil. i. 23.]

but extort from us, but the other is an act of the will, which is not so easily brought to perform its duty, to mortify the flesh with the affections and lusts, the work of repentance here required of us. And I beseech you let us not be too confident that we have performed our task, though we could resolve to be content, nay glad to die with Christ,—for so you know Peter could do, and deny and blaspheme Him after it,—unless we have that second martyrdom,—that Cyprian[c], or somebody in his disguise, hath writ a book of,—that vital martyrdom of our exemplary, saintly, penitent lives to improve and consummate the other: and so still we are not got so far as repentance; we require more storms, more thunder-bolts, more rousing tempests, more pressing calamities yet, to drive us thither.

A third sort may have arrived to a third and greater degree of proficiency yet in the school of judgments, to a resolution and practice of patience under God's hand, how heavy soever it prove, and yet let me tell you, come short of repentance still: for, I beseech you observe, there is a double submission unto God, to His will, and to His wisdom; that to His will revealed as well as secret; revealed for the duties, secret for the sufferings of this life; the first in an active, the second in a passive obedience to heaven. The submitting to God's will in suffering what He lays upon us,—the utmost degree of patience that the most of us attain to, and when we have done that, think ourselves champions and martyrs of the first magnitude,—is but a very moderate degree of Christian fortitude, that which Christ needed not have ascended to the cross to preach unto us: a man must be a kind of mad atheist to come short of that, for what is it but atheism to think it possible to resist His will? and what but madness to attempt it? It is that high philosophy of submitting to His wisdom, the acknowledging God the best chooser for us, the stripes which He sends, far fitter for our turns than all the boons we pray for, His denying of our demands, the divinest way of granting them, and, in a word, the resolving that whatever is, is best, whatsoever He hath done, best to be done, whatsoever permitted, best to be permitted,—

οὐχ ὅγ' ἄνευθε θεοῦ τάδε μαίνεται[d], ———

[c] [De laude martyrii ad Moysen et Maximum vulgo inscripta oratio.]
[d] [Hom. Il. ε'. 185.]

SERM. IV.

that very fury and madness of earth and hell, is a piece of God's economy,—whatsoever is revealed to be His will by its coming to pass among us, is (though the actors in that tragedy shall pay dearly for it, yet) better and more desirable and eligible for us, than all friends and patron guardians in heaven and earth, yea, and our own souls, could have contrived and chosen for us. The good Hezekiah's "Good is the word of the Lord which He hath spoken," when it denounced destruction to his whole family; old Nahum's גם זו לטובא, "even this for good," to the heaviest news that ever came, so oft repeated, that we find him in Elias Levita, surnamed Gamzo, "even this," the firm adherence to the truth of that apostolical aphorism, that "all things tend to good to them that love God," from tribulation through seven degrees to sword or death itself, and the forming all our lives by the plastic virtue of this one article; this submission, I say, to His wisdom, superadded to that other to His will, and that attended with its natural consequent, "a rejoicing in tribulation," is the lesson God's rod must teach us; yea and submission in actions as well as sufferings, to His precepts as well as to His decrees, doing cheerfully, as well as patiently enduring His will, or else we are still but punies in St. Paul's academy, but triflers in the school of the cross of Christ.

[2 Kings xx. 19.]

[Rom. viii. 28.]

[Rom. v. 3.]

Once more, denunciations of God's wrath may set us a praying oftener than we were wont before, make us assiduous and importunate in that duty; the tempest in Jonah may cast the heathen mariners upon their knees, crying every man unto his God, and yet for want of the clean hands to spread forth towards heaven, of the new soul to exhale and breathe forth those prayers, the liveliest of those flames, like all those which our earthly fire brings forth, faint and extinguish long before they come to that region of purity. It was the blind man's divinity, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners," a principle of blind nature; and Hierocles a philosopher descants excellently upon it, "the sacrifice of such unreformed fools is but *πυρὸς τροφὴ*, but a feast for the fire to prey on, their offerings to the temple *ἱεροσύλοις χορηγία*, a prize for the sacrilegious to seize on; the wise man is the only priest, the only friend of God, *μόνος εἰδὼς εὔξασθαι*, the only man that knows how to pray, offering up himself

[Jonah i. 5.]

[John ix. 31.]

for a sacrifice, hewing his lower soul into an image, his upper into a temple of his deity."

I might shew you some more of these inferior uses, imperfect sudden motions, that these judgments may have forced from us: and so still like chymics in the pursuit of the philosopher's stone, we meet with many handsome experiments by the way, please ourselves in our journey, though never attain to our journey's end: these sad times, and this forced study and contemplation of God in His judgments, may have cast us upon some considerable Christian virtues, and yet not advanced us within any ken of that great transcendant treasure, to which all the ignis and the sulphur, the fire and the brimstone of His judgments, that vast expense of thunderbolts, to the emptying of His armoury, was designed. Repentance is a higher pitch than any or all of these, and it is only repentance is the proper use of this sad doctrine; and not all kinds that pass under that title neither: and that must be shewed you in our next stage.

And first, the repentance we speak of is not sorrow, whether for misery or for sin. For misery, that sluice which lets out such rivers of tears, which gets away all the custom from godly sorrow or humiliation: such sorrow as this, is admirably described by God, and called "assembling themselves for corn," fasting and praying only upon the loss and for the recovering of worldly plenty, and this, it seems, very reconcilable with all the impiety in the world, for it follows, "and they rebel against Me." Nor bare sorrow for sin neither, that which some men call repentance, and by so doing have filled hell with none but penitents, for I am confident there is not an unhappy creature there which hath not both these parts of sorrow, both for his misery, and for his fall that betrayed him to it; had he not, hell were not half so much hell as it is, two of the sorest tormentors would be missing, the sense of the flames, and the gnawing of the worm, the one extorting the tears, the other the gnashing of the teeth.

[2 Cor. vii. 9.]

Hos. vii. 14.

Nor, secondly, humiliation alone, though that were a great rarity to be found among us; for though that might prevail to avert or defer secular calamities from a kingdom, as it did from Ahab,—and therefore our Satan that accuses this nation day and night before God, will not allow us this common

[1 Kings xxi. 27.]

SERM. IV.

grace; after all our sufferings the whole nation, God knows, is as unhumbled as ever,—yet will not a bare humiliation under God's rod be accepted for a sufficient return, when repentance and change is called for.

No, nor thirdly, the sudden passionate motions toward reformation, the shooting up of the seed in the stony ground: many such weak false conceptions there are in the world, and an ἔκρυσις, or speedy abortion, the common fate of them all, like the goats in the philosopher, that give milk when they are stung, but never else. "When He slew them they sought Him, and turned them early and enquired after God." Every one of these is but a poor imperfect payment of that great arrear, that God's terrors and imminent judgments are come, like the ὑπηρέτης in the Gospel, to arrest us for; and if we do not presently make our peace with our adversary, by rendering him that only royal tribute, the sincere, impartial, uniform obedience of our whole age to come, and counting the time past of our lives sufficient to have wrought the will of the gentiles, give ourselves up an early and voluntary sacrifice to Christ, first to be slain before Him, then brought forth,—like Antinous in Homer,

[Matt. xiii. 5.] [Ps. lxxviii. 34.] [Matt. v. 25.] [1 Pet. iv. 3.]

Ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ἤδη κεῖται ὃς αἴτιος ἔπλετο πάντων[e],

"there lies the sin, laid out a spotted corpse, that hath brought all the misery upon us,"—and then offered up upon His altars, so many devoted mortified new creatures that have the addition of fire to that of air and water in the mixture, the active, vital, as well as the sighing, weeping penitentiaries,—the imitation of the sacrifices of old,

——— χρυσὸν κερασὶ περιχεύας[f],

"gold poured about the horns of the sacrifice,"—not only the ox or bestial part slain, but righteousness and mercy to the poor used as the ceremonies of breaking off our sins, of slaying that sacrifice,—as in the primitive times no penitent was re-admitted to the Church without ἀγαθοεργίαι, or alms-deeds, and for him that was in the Church there was yet no coming to the Sacrament without an offertory,—then still after all this passionate variety hath God's

[Dan. iv. 27.]

[e] [Hom. Od. χ'. 48.]

[f] [Hom. Od. γ. 384.]

message not yet had audience from us, and till God may be heard by us, there is small hope that we shall ever be heard by God; for repentance is not only the only use of the denunciation, but withal the only preservative or phylactery, the only way of averting the judgment which is now at hand, my last particular, "Repent, for it is at hand." SERM. IV.

And here I shall be able but only to draw you a scheme of what I had designed you, a rude draught of dead lines, and not venture to importune your patience with a ζωγράφησις, but only tell you that I had purposed,

1. To explain to you that mystery of Scripture, the distribution of God's judgments into reversible and irreversible.

And 2. to give you the mark or character in Scripture discriminating the one from the other; the reversible under God's word only, the "Nineveh shall be destroyed," and yet Nineveh repents, and Nineveh is not destroyed; the irreversible under God's oath also, "though these three men were in it, Noah, Daniel, and Job, as I live, saith the Lord, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters," &c. [Jonah iii. 4. 10.] [Ezek. xiv. 14. 20.]

3. The commonness and frequency of the motion, of the προκοπὴ, or proficiency of one of these states into the other, the change that some addition of judgments, and years, and sins, and intercalary mercies, may make in God's decrees, their improvement into irreversible. Thus it is very possible that upon the first breaking out of these judgments upon this land, the beginning of this rousing sermon, the fate and state of this kingdom might be a reversible mutable state, like the souls of men in Maximus Tyrius, ἀμφισβητήσιμοι καὶ ἐν μετρίῳ, in a "pendulous middle posture." But since the prodigious unkindly working of these medicinal inflictions, as of the bitter water in the trial of jealousy, making the thigh to rot and the belly to swell; since to all the sins that before we had borrowed from our neighbours we have added so many more from the fiends and furies, to the rifling and impoverishing as it were of hell itself; since those armies of high uncleannesses, of lies, of crafts, of multiplied oaths, a strange discordant grating harmony in the ears of God, of sacrilegious rapines and profanations, of—, (I beseech you save me the pains of confessing them for you) that sin might be [Numb. v. 21, 22. 27.]

SERM. IV.

exceeding sinful, and destruction exceeding destructive, and —after some intermission of judgments but none of provocations—since a dove-like emblem of peace hath been hovering over our heads, but not permitted to rest upon us, disclaimed and driven out of our region as a vulture or screech-owl, the most ominous hated enemy; since the concurrence of all these, I say, it is also as possible we may be now improved and advanced to our full measure.

But then 4. I should have shewed you also the indiscernibleness, to the eye of man, of the difference of these distant states, till God by His promulgate sentence have made the separation;—we have not such skill in palmistry as to interpret the lines and strokes in God's hand, which hath been long upon us, nor in symptoms, as to judge whether ὀλέθριον κάρτα λίαν, whether it be infallibly mortal or no;—and from thence the possibility yet, that it may not be too late for us to return and live, to set God a copy of repenting. But then

5. Till this be done, every minute we breathe we suck our poison, we run upon all the spears and cannons in the world; nay, if God should hear us before we have answered Him, if mercy should interpose before repentance and reformation make us capable of it, that very mercy were to be deprecated as the greatest judgment in the world, a kind of hell of desertion, a "why should ye be smitten any more?" a not vouchsafing us the medicinal stripes, a delivering us up to ourselves as to the fatallest revengefullest enemies, the most merciless bloodiest executioners. God may spare us in wrath, relieve us in fury, give us a treacherous settlement, a palliate peace,—the saddest presage and forerunner imaginable;—and such it is sure to be if the surface of the flesh be healed before the βάθος καρδίας, the depth of the wound in the heart, be searched and mollified, if God repent before we repent; and against such mercies we have more reason to pray than against all the πύρωσις and intestine flames, all the Tophets, and purgatories, and hells, that the fury of men or devils can kindle within our coasts: the same motive that made St. Basil call for his fever again, to wit, if the recovering of his health were the reflourishing of his pride, may move us to pray for the continuance of this state fever till our impeni-

[Is. i. 5.]

tent hearts be humbled. I will make you my confessors; till this kingdom be really and visibly the better for stripes, I cannot without some regrets, some fears of uncharitableness, pray absolutely for peace for it. Lord, purge us, Lord, cleanse us with Thy sharp infusions, cure and heal our souls by these caustics of Thine, and then Thou mayest spare that charge, pour in Thy wine and Thine oil instead of them; but till then, *Domine nolumus indulgentiam hanc*, "Lord, we are afraid of Thy indulgence," we are undone if Thou be too merciful, we tremble to think of our condition if Thou shouldest give over Thy cure too early, if Thou shouldest tear off our plasters and our flesh together, restore our flourishing before Thou hast humbled and changed our souls.

I have done with my last particular also.

Please you now but to spell these elements together, the sad threats of a direful kingdom, the but one word between us and that, only repentance, to sanctify it to us, and avert it from us, the Baptist miraculously born to preach it to them, and the same voice now crying in the wilderness to this nation, in the midst of a whole Africa of monsters, a desert of wilder men; and if this raven sent out of the ark, the place of God's rest in heaven, thus long hovering over this earth of ours,—going to and fro only on this errand, to see whether the waters be dried up from off the earth, whether the deluge of sin be abated,—may not yet be allowed some rest for the sole of her foot: if at the heels of that, the dove-like Spirit moving once more upon the waters, may not find one olive leaf among us to carry back, in token that we are content to hear of peace, to be friends with God; if having Moses and so many prophets, the rod of the one so long on our shoulders, and the thunder of the other in our ears, we cannot yet be brought this day to hear this voice, this *φωνὴ κράζουσα*, this clamorous importunate voice, "Repent" or perish irreversibly, I must then divert with that other prophet, with an "O altar, altar, hear the word of the Lord," because Jeroboam's heart was harder than that, with an "O earth, earth, earth," with a "Hear, O heaven, and hearken, O earth," fly to the deafest creatures in the world, because I can have no better auditors. In this case preaching is the

[1 Kings xiii. 2.]

[Jer. xxii. 29.]

[Is. i. 2.]

SERM. IV.

most uncharitable thing, apt only to improve our ruin, like breath when it meets with fire, only to increase our flames. There is nothing left tolerably seasonable but our prayers, that our hearts, being the only whole creatures in the kingdom, may at last be broken also; that by His powerful, controlling, convincing Spirit, the proud atheistical spirit that reigns among us may at last be humbled to the dust; that in the ruin of the kingdom of Satan, his pride, his sorceries, his rebellions, may be erected the humble heavenly kingdom of our Christ, that meekness, that lowliness, that purity, that mercifulness, that peaceableness, that power of the Gospel spirit, that we may be a nation of Christians first, and then of saints; that having taken up the close of the angels' anthem, "Good will towards men," we may pass through "peace on earth," and ascend to that "Glory to God on high," and with all that celestial choir ascribe to Him the glory, the honour, the power, the praise, &c.

[Luke ii. 14.]

SERMON V.

GOD IS THE GOD OF BETHEL.

GEN. xxxi. 13.

I am the God of Bethel.

SERM. V. Gen. xxviii.

THE story of God's appearing to Jacob at Luz, is so known a passage, so remarkable even to children by that memorative topic, the ladder and the angels, that I shall not need assist your memories, but only tell you that that passage at large, that vision and the consequents of it, from the twelfth verse of the twenty-eighth to the end of the chapter, is the particular foundation of the words of this text, and the rise which I am obliged to take in the handling of them. That hard pillow which the benighted Jacob had chosen for himself in Luz,—and became so memorable to him by the vision afforded him there,—he anointed and christened, as it were, named it anew, on that occasion, into Bethel, the "house" or residence "of God," consecrated it into a temple, solemnized that consecration, endowed that temple with a vow and resolution of all the minchahs and nedabahs, acts of obedience and free-will offerings, duty and piety imaginable; and the whole business was so pleasurable and acceptable to God, God's appearing to him, and his returns to God, that in the words of my text,—twenty years after that passage,—God puts him in mind of what there passed, and desires to be no otherwise acknowledged by him than as He there appeared and revealed Himself, "I am the God of Bethel," &c.

For the clear understanding of which it will be necessary to recollect the chief remarkable passages that are recorded in that story, and seem to be principally referred to here, and then I shall be able to give you the survey and the

SERM. V.

full dimensions of Bethel, the adequate importance of this text.

And the passages are more generally but three.

1. God's signal promises of mercy and bounty to Jacob, emblematically resembled by the ladder from earth to heaven, God standing on the top of that, and the angels busy on their attendance, ascending and descending on it; and then in plain words the emblem interpreted, the hieroglyphic explained, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, &c. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, &c. And behold,"—there is the signal promise I told you of, that belongs to every pilgrim patriarch, every tossed itinerant servant and favourite of Heaven, that carries the simplicity and piety of Jacob along with him, though he be for the present, in that other title of his, the poor Syrian ready to perish,—"behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land: for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

ver. 13—15.

The second passage is, Jacob's consecrating of this place of God's appearance, anointing the pillar, and naming it Bethel, in the eighteenth and nineteenth verses.

The third and last is Jacob's vow unto God, on condition of that His blessing him. "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, so that I come to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God, and this stone which I have set for a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that Thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto Thee."

ver. 20.

These are the three principal passages in that story, and in relation to each of these, I am now obliged to handle the words, and consequently to divide them, not into parts, but considerations, and so look on them as they stand.

First, in relation to God's promise there made; and so first, God is the God of Bethel.

[ver. 17.] Secondly, in relation to this dreadful, this consecrated place, as Bethel signifies the residence, the house of God; and so secondly, God is the God of Bethel.

Thirdly, in relation to Jacob's vow there made, and so thirdly and especially and most eminently God is the God of Bethel, as it follows in the verse, "I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst a pillar, and vowedst a vow unto Me."

I begin first with the first of these, the relation of the words to God's appearing and making promise to Jacob; so *Ego Deus Bethelis*, "God is the God of Bethel."

And in that first view you will have tender of three severals; I will give you them as they rise.

1. That God takes a great deal of delight in making and recounting of promises made to His children; the free omnipotent donor of all the treasures of the world, is better pleased to behold Himself our debtor than our prince, triumphs more in His punctual fidelity than His superabundant mercy towards us; He that loves us passionately, that once put Himself into a dropping sweat in a mere agony of love, poured out His heart-blood in that passion, that delights to do us good, joying more in dispensing favours and obligations than any man living in receiving them, doth yet more affectionately rejoice and triumph in seeing Himself engaged and obliged to us, in being faithful and just,—which relates to His performing His engagements, that which by promise He hath bound Himself to do, and so becomes His righteousness and His payment of dues,—than in the honour of being unlimitedly free to pour out acts of all mercy and unexpected bounty, matters of absolute choice whether He will do them or no. In the very story of which this text is a part, God certainly might have enriched Jacob by what means He pleased, conducted him home to his country upon that one score of His free mercy,—as well as He may bring His chosen to heaven merely by acts of free grace,—but you see He chooses to do it on that other style, as He is the God of Bethel, that ever since the mutual compact betwixt Him and Jacob there, hath stood obliged to this poor Syrian, and must deny Himself if He be not constant to Jacob. Thus Deut. vii. 9, "The Lord thy God He is God;" and the only attribute that there he proclaims Him in, is that of the faithful God; the faithful, and that further insisted on, which keepeth covenant and mercy; first covenant, and then mercy: and so Isa. lxix. 7, "Because

SERM. V.

of the Lord that is faithful." And how many times is this style repeated in the New Testament, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able;" and "God is faithful, which will not forget your labour of love," &c.; is as exact and punctual in performing covenants, as strictly accurate in fulfilling of bargains, as the most covetous griping merchant on earth would require his chapman to be. And the reason or design of this method of Heaven, the aim of this economy, is presently discernible also.

[1 Cor. x. 13.]

[Heb. vi. 10.]

First, to regulate and moderate the expectations and hopes of men, which are apt to be very sanguine and very precipitous, hoping proportionably to God's power, i. e. infinitely, unlimitedly, whatsoever our carnal hearts can aspire to, to have sins pardoned before they are mortified, to see God without any kind of purifying. Whereas this God of Bethel, that will be looked upon only as such, must be required to do no more than He hath promised to do, our hopes must be terminated in His revelations of His will, not whatever He may do by His infinite free power and grace, but what He in wisdom hath thought good to promise, as the rector of the universe, not as an absolute irrespective donor; and that is so far from a confinement or restraint, that it is a mighty enhancement of the mercy. His promises being generally conditional promises, and so exacting all manner of sincere honest endeavours towards cleansing, reach out to us, together with the mercy offered, an engagement of that purity and that sanctity, which, if it may be wrought in our hearts, is far the greater blessing of the two, hath more of divine and heavenly treasure in it, than the rescuing out of a sullen Laban's clutches: and so, as it is observed of Pomponius Atticus[a], that by lending to the poor, and requiring payment again of the loan at the day appointed, he did more good than if he had absolutely and freely given, taught them justice and indus-

[a] [Præter gratiam quæ jam adolescentulo magna erat, sæpe suis opibus inopiam eorum publicam levavit. Cum enim versuram facere publice necesse esset, neque ejus conditionem æquam haberent, semper se interposuit, atque ita ut neque usuram unquam ab iis acceperit, neque longius quam dictum esset, eos debere passus sit. Quod utrumque erat iis salutare. Nam neque indulgendo inveterascere eorum æs alienum patiebatur, neque multiplicandis usuris crescere.—Corn. Nep. in vit. Att. c. 2. p. 154.]

try, as well as relieved their wants,—and the two former the far richer donatives,—so God by this course of promises, conditional promises, conditional liberality, gives us duty and piety also into the bargain, all manner of obligations to it; and so is a thorough Paraclete, an exhorter and comforter both, puts Jacob in mind of his vowed necessary obedience, by the mention of the promises made in Bethel, and that is one prime aim of this method, of God's magnifying Himself in this relation.

A second (benefit at least to us, and consequently) aim in God there is, to teach us by this copy, discipline us by this example, that we take care to allow God our proportionable returns, to be as just with God as punctually faithful in all our promises to Him, as forward to put God in mind of what we have obliged ourselves to perform to Him, as He by proclaiming Himself here "the God of the promises in Bethel," and in so many other places "the God of Abraham," i. e. that God that made so many promises to Abraham,—in which all the people of the world are concerned,— hath done unto us. This were an admirable lesson from hence to be transcribed into our hearts, to have our frequent set (weekly or monthly) audits with God, to tell Him freely how much we are in His debt; not only to recount those desperate arrears, the sins committed for which we come now for pardon, but especially the obligations entered which we might set ourselves bodily to perform, most freely and cheerfully commemorating before Him not only the *θεῖαι παραγγελίαι* and *ἱεροὶ νόμοι*, the divine admonitions and holy laws whispered inarticulately in our hearts, which the heathen Porphyry tells of, the obligations that lie upon us as men and creatures, and must be discharged by us if ever we aspire to the dignity of Christians or saints, *πρῶτον δεῖ ἄνθρωπον εἶναι, καὶ τότε θεὸν*, we must approve ourselves men first, and then Christians, live a reasonable before we are ever capable of the angelical life,—first that which is natural, and after that which is spiritual,—but also the promises and engagements of an higher indenture, those of the Christian, either that one standing obligation entered at the font, which must be resolved to have a close influence upon every minute of the age after, or moreover all the many penitential resolutions,

[Gen. xvii. 7.] [Heb. vi. 13.]

SERM. V.

all the occasional quarrels against sin, the indignations and vowed revenges on those boutefeux that have so disturbed our peace with Heaven. Would we but spend our time in this recounting and discharging of promises and obligations, pay God His plain dues of obedience, that which we are most strictly bound to by the law of Christ, and for which our own hands are so many times producible against us, we should not need much to take up our thoughts with the pride or confidence of our free-will oblations, the boasts of our charities and alms toward Heaven; he that would but consider that to be faithful,—as in God toward men, so in man toward God,—signifies not so much to believe the promises of others as to perform our own, that the faith by which the just do live, consists in the paying of our vows to Christ, as well as depending on His blood or promise for salvation, would endeavour to recover Christianity and faith to a better reputation in the world than now ordinarily seems to belong to it, would live more justly and more christianly than he doth. And let that serve for the first part of your prospect, the first observable in the first view.

[Rom. i. 17.]

The second thing from this title of God's, as it refers to His promises of mercy to Jacob, made in Bethel, and repeated now at his departure from Laban, is this, that God would have us consider the blessings we enjoy, and observe particularly how and whence they descend to us. This is the direct end of this vision to Jacob, "Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams," &c. The thriving of that stratagem of Jacob's, the invention of the peeled rods, whereby he was grown so rich in despite of Laban's malice, God will have ponderingly considered, and imputed as an act of His special interposition or providence, partly in justice, that the covetous Laban should not too much oppress him, "I have seen all that Laban doth unto thee," partly to make good His promise at Bethel, made then, and now most particularly performed, "I am the God of Bethel." And believe it, there is not a duty more necessary, and yet more negligently performed, more fruitful and nutritive of piety, and yet more wretchlessly despised and intermitted, than this; this of observing this ladder from heaven to earth, of beholding all the good things that we lawfully enjoy, descending in an

ver. 11, 12.

chap. xxx.

angel's hand, and that filled,—as the pitcher out of the well, or as Aaron's son's hands from his father at the entering on the high-priest's office,—from the hand of God standing on the top of the ladder. He that would thus critically examine his estate upon interrogatories, put every part of it upon the rack and torture, to confess without any disguise from whence it came, whether down the ladder from heaven or up out of the deep,—for there, it seems by the poets, Plutus or riches hath a residence also,—by what means it was conveyed, by whose directions it travelled into that coast, and what the end of its coming is, and so learn the genealogy, as it were, of all his wealth, would certainly acknowledge that he were fallen upon a most profitable enquiry. For beside that he would find out all the ill-gotten treasure,—that gold of Toulouse that is so sure to help melt all the rest, that which is gotten by sacrilege, by oppression, by extortion, and so take timely advice to purge his lawful inheritance from such noisome, unwholesome acquisitions, and thrive the better for ever after the taking so necessary a purgation,—he will, I say, over and above, see the original of all his wealth, all that is worthy to be called such, either immediately or mediately from God; immediately without any co-operation of ours, as that which is left us by inheritance from honest parents,—our fortunes and our Christianity together;—mediately, as that which our lawful labour, our planting and watering, hath brought down upon us, wholly from God's *καρποφορία* or *εὐοδία*, His prospering or giving of increase. And when we have once thus discerned the peculiarity of our tenure, only that of allodium, not from any *ἀλλ' ἐκ Διὸς*, but from God,—as the lawyers have derived that word,—all that we have held *in capite* from Heaven; as this will be the sweetening of our wealth to us, give it a flavour or an high taste whensoever we feed on it, more joy in one well-gotten morsel,—the festival of a good conscience,—than all the *τομαὶ* or *μερίδες*, the portions fetched from the bloody polluted heathen idol altars ever would afford us, so will it enflame our souls towards so royal a benefactor, teach us piety from our fields and coffers,—as even Aristotle can talk of his *εὐτυχία φιλόθεος*[b], "that rich men will love God, if for nothing else, yet because He hath

SERM. V.

[Lev. viii.]

[1 Cor. iii. 6.]

[b] [Aristot. Rhet. ii. 17.]

SERM. V.

done them good turns;" and Hippocrates, that "though the poor did generally murmur and complain, yet the wealthy would be offering sacrifice,"—yea and inspire our whole lives with an active vital gratitude, by the use of this wealth to demonstrate and acknowledge whence we have received it, by refunding and employing it not on our own ways, our own humours, our own vanities, but as that which God hath conveyed into our hands as into an ecclesiastic treasury or corban, a storehouse of God's, whence all His poor family is to be victualled; that which God pours out of heaven into our hands, being as particularly marked out for charitable, pious, i. e. heavenly uses, as that which by the bounty of men is entrusted to us particularly for those ends, and every rich man as directly and properly a steward of God's, to feed His household when they want it, and as strictly responsible for this stewardship as ever the ἀντιλήψεις and κυβερνήσεις were, the auxiliary governments, the deacons in the ancient Church, ordained by the Apostles for that charitable ministry. You remember the πτωχοδεκάτη, the poor man's tything among the Jews every third year, and till that was paid in "and given to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates and be filled," their estates are to be counted profane and unhallowed, no looking for a blessing from God's holy habitation. He that sacrifices all to his own desires, be they in the eye of the world never so blameless and justifiable, to his own belly, his own back, nay his own bowels,—as his own good nature and not Christian charity suggests to him,—he that hath not a month Abib, a green stalk, a first-fruits for heaven, an effusion of bounty, to consecrate and bless all that is kept for his own necessities, is either very unkind or very imprudent, either sees not from whence he hath received, and that is atheistical stupidity, or else never thinks of securing his tenure by the payment of his homage, of making so much as acknowledgment to this God, whose providence hath so wholly enriched him, the God of this Bethel in the text, and that is the unthriftiest piece of ingratitude, the wildest and most irrational ill-husbandry in the world.

[1 Cor. xii. 28.]

Deut. xxvi. 12.

ver. 15.

The third and last observable in the first view in order to the promises of Bethel, is this, that our prayers and humble

dependence on God is the means required to actuate God's promises, to bring down His blessings upon us. In Bethel there were ascending angels, parallel to which must be those two ambassadors or nuncios, i. e. angels, of every honest Christian heart, before any messages from God, any descending angels are to be expected thence; and as it was then typified there, so God ever loves and appoints to have it still, "I am the God of Bethel;" and therefore whatever we want of either outward or inward accomplishments, secular or spiritual good successes, prosperities of kingdoms or of souls, would we but look critically into ourselves, we should go near to find imputable to the want in us of one or both these ascending angels, either that the things we would have, we dare not justify the asking or expecting them from God, because they are such only as we desire to spend on our lusts, [Jas. iv. 3.] and then we have not because we ask amiss; or else we are so over-hasty in pursuit of them, that we utterly forget the dependence and waiting upon God, the "stand still and see [Exod. xiv. 13.] the salvation of the Lord." If He be not ready with His auxiliaries on our first call, deliverance shall come in some other way; the witch must prevent and supply the Samuel's place, the first creature that will look a little kindly upon us, shall get away all the applications from heaven,—as in some countries, whatsoever they chanced to see first every morning, they solemnly worshipped all the day after;—the most airy appearances of relief from the improbablest coast shall be able to attract our hopes and trusts, and unbottom us utterly from God, as Socrates is brought in by the comedian with his ὦ δεσπότ' ἀὴρ[c], a making his addresses to the air or clouds, when he had turned out all other worships out of his heart. The thing that makes a worldling such a piteous creature, such a meteor in Christ's, such an unstable wave of the sea in St. James' style, tossed perpetually betwixt ebbs [Jas. i. 6.] and floats of hopes,—even without the association of any wind to drive him,—while the only poor, patient, waiting Christian that hath sent out his good genius on his message up the ladder, and waits contentedly and calmly for his return again, is the only fixed star in this lower firmament, his

[c] [Aristoph. Nub. 264.]

SERM. V.

feet stand fast, be the pavement never so slippery, he believeth in the Lord. That Orpheus that in his life-time had made his applications to as many gods as there be days in the year,—and thence perhaps it was that Mexico had so many temples,—grew wiser by more observation, and left in his will ἕνα εἶναι μόνον, "that there was but one." It were well if we might do so too, profit by his experience, divest ourselves of all our airy poetic dependences betimes, and roll ourselves wholly upon God; it were the only probable thriving policy in the world.

I have detained you too long in the first isle of this Bethel, that which gives you a view of God's promises there made. I hasten to the second, the *atrium interius,* to consider God in relation to this dreadful, this consecrated place, as Bethel literally signifies *Beth El,* the house, the temple of God, and so God hath a peculiarity of respect to that, "I am the God of Bethel," in the second sense, i. e. the God of God's house.

And here were a copious theme indeed should we take a view of the material Bethel, and in it observe

1. The voluntary institution and dedication of temples even before the law was given to the Jews,—as after it the ἐγκαίνια, or feast of dedication, being of a mere human original, instituted, as the feast of Purim, and the fast of the fifth and seventh month in Zachary, by the Jews themselves, and not by God's immediate appointment, was yet celebrated, and consequently approved by Christ;—and after the Jewish law was laid asleep, yet the building and setting apart of synagogues, and oratories, and upper rooms; and since *basilicæ* and κυριακαὶ, the parallels of the Bethel here, the palaces of the great King and Lord, appropriate to His public worship whenever persecution did not drive it thence.

[Esther ix. 26.] [Zech. vii. 3. 5; viii. 19.] 1 Macc. iv. John x. [22, 23.]

2. The vowed dedication and payment of tithes toward the endowing of Bethel before there was any such thing as Judaism in the world, which therefore it were strange that God's subsequent command to the Jews, His own people, should make unlawful to a Christian, which otherwise, had He not commanded it, must have been as commendable now as it was in Jacob.

These, I say, with divers others, are the so many branches of this second consideration of these words, of the relation of God to Bethel: but I have not that unkindness to my auditory as to pursue them with such a shoal of unseasonable subjects.

There is another Bethel, the flesh of man, wherein God Himself was pleased to inhabit, *σκηνοῦν*, saith St. John, to pitch His tent or tabernacle there, to consecrate it into a very temple; our bodies are the temples of that Holy Ghost, by which Christ was so long ago conceived among us; and thence it is that His eyes and His heart are set so particularly upon this flesh of ours, to cleanse, and to drain, and to spiritualize it, to expostulate with us whenever we put it to any common profane uses, as if we violated and ravished Christ Himself, and forcibly joined Him to an harlot, and at last, if it prove capable of such dignity, to array it in all holiness and glory, to clothe it upon with beauty and with bliss immortal: and so God is the God of this Bethel also.

[1 Cor. vi. 19.]

[1 Cor. v. 2, 3.]

Beside this, there is yet one more invisible house of God wherein He delights to be enthroned, and by God's own confession, more than either in the temple of His own building, or the heaven of His own exalting, even the poor contemptible 'this man,' for whom nobody else hath any kind looks, he that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at His word; this is that lovely dress that is so ravishing in God's eyes, that sets out every cottage into a temple, the poorest peasant into the consecrated delight of Christ, the most abject stones in Luz, once anointed with this grace, into an awful royal Bethel, the "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price," *πολυτελής*. God is content to be at a great deal of charge in the purchase of it, to pardon the absence of a great many other excellencies which may possibly exalt us above measure, so He may acquire but this one desired beloved meekness instead of all. Let us but possess ourselves of this one jewel, the 'meek' in opposition to the proud, the 'quiet' in opposition to the tragical or turbulent, murmuring, impatient, atheistical spirit, and the God of Bethel hath a peculiar propriety to us: He that owns and defends His temples, that is

Isa. lxvi. [ver. 2.]

SERM. V.

the refuge of the very sanctuary itself, and never, but for the pride and insolencies and provocations of His Church, suffers the Philistines to seize on the ark of His glory, will be a refuge and sanctuary to us; the angels at Bethel shall become thy guardians, the cherubim-wings thy overshadowing, until this tempest, this tyranny be overpast. [Ps.lvii.1.]

I have done with the second view also, as the Bethel here is the dreadful house of God, though it be not the dread of it that hath made our stay so short there, but only my desire to hasten to my last, as my principally designed particular, as Bethel refers to Jacob's vow there made, as it follows in the verse, "where thou vowedst a vow unto Me;" and God hath a most particular respect and relation to such vows, and so in the chief though last place, *Ego Deus Bethelis*, "I am the God of Bethel." [ver. 13.]

A vow is a holy resolution, and somewhat more; the matter of both is the same, a piece of holy valour or courage, entering under God's colours into a constant defiance of all the temptations and affrightments, invitations and terrors in nature. Only the bare resolution hath not the formality of a vow in it, is not made so immediately and directly to God, with such a particular invocation of Him as is required to the formality of a vow. Yet will not this difference be so great but that in all reason the good resolution ought to be allowed its title of pretension to God's owning—as He is the God of Bethel—as well as the vow, i. e. the material as well as the formal vow; God is a God of all such of either kind. I shall consider them undistinctly; whether resolutions or vows, they are of two sorts, either the general necessary vow, or resolution, that God shall be our God, as in chap. xxviii. 21, "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, &c., then shall the Lord be my God," a vowed resolution of universal obedience unto God; or whether the matter of it be particularly qualified and restrained to free-will offerings, things that he was not otherwise bound absolutely to have done, but yet were very fit matter of resolution and vow, especially in such case as this, "If God will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then this stone shall be God's house, and of all that

Thou shalt give me I will surely give a tenth to Thee;" a free-will liberality this, the business of this vow. SERM. V.

We shall look upon these two separately, and first on the former kind of them, and shew you how God is the God of such, the near respect and close relation He beareth to them, and that most eminently expressed in three particulars: 1. In approving and applauding the making of them. 2. In prospering them when they are made. 3. In looking after them as His own property and goods, most severely requiring the payment, the performance of them.

For the first sort then, the general necessary resolution or vow that God shall be our God, the solemn ceremonious entering ourselves into His family, the giving up our ears to this new master to be opened in the Psalmist's, bored in Moses' phrase, to part from the benefit of all sabbatical years or jubilees, to disclaim all desire of manumission, and to become His vowed servants for ever; this is that great duty of repentance, or conversion, or new birth, that is the sum of all Christianity, that spiritual proselytism to which the Jew was wont to be washed, as the Christian is baptized, and both to take upon them new names, new kindreds and relations, as if they had entered into the mother's womb again, and come out in new families, new countries, born neither of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, i.e. none of the principles of this world, *στοιχεῖα κόσμου τούτου*, the natural, the carnal, nay, nor the moral virtuous philosophical elements, but of God, of a supernatural, heavenly origination. [Ps. xl. 6.] [Exod. xxi. 6.] [John iii. 4.] [John i. 13.]

In a word, the cordial renouncing of all the impure, scandalous doubtful ways that either ourselves or any of the vicious company about us,—the Lacædemonian servants that God hath permitted to be drunk and bestial before us, to practise all villanies in our presence, that we might detest and abominate them the more,—have at any time formerly been guilty of. Such was Job's covenant with the eye, that that should not run its riotous courses over the beauties or wealth of others; such the covenant with the tongue, to break it off its customary oaths and loose language. [Job xxxi. 1.]

It were infinite to number up the several branches of these so necessary resolutions; that this God of Bethel is the God

SERM. V.

of such, is the thing that we are obliged to demonstrate. And 1. In respect of God's approbation of such resolutions as these. There is no such snare or artifice of taking and obliging God to us, as our dedicating and consecrating ourselves to God. If Solomon consecrate a temple to God, God binds Himself to be present there, to hear and hearken, and answer what prayers and supplications soever any sinner shall make toward that temple. And sure the same privilege belongs to the animate as well as dead temple, to the temple of flesh as well as of stone, to the anointed pillar at Luz, when that turns Bethel, I mean, to the stony heart of man, when by the unction of the spirit that is mollified and fitted and squared, vowed and consecrated into an habitation for God, when out of these stones a child of Abraham, the faithful resolved new creature, is raised up. No such good news to heaven as this; not only approbation, but joy in heaven over one such convert prodigal: the music that Pythagoras talks of in the orbs, was that of the minstrels which our Saviour mentions at the return of that prodigal, to solemnize the *euge's*, the passionate welcomes of heaven poured out on penitents.

[2 Chron. vi. 38, 39; vii. 14-16.]

[Mat. iii. 9.]

[Luke xv. 7. 10.]

And if you please, I can do more than the Pythagorean would pretend to, make you auditors of one of those airs. No sooner doth the poor penitent votary begin to God in the Psalmist's note, "Then said I, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O my God,"—and let me tell you, could you hear those words in the language that David sang them, there were without a figure, rhythm and harmony, numbers and music in them,—but you may presently hear God Himself answering in the *ἀμοιβαῖον*, or counterpart, echoing back a *Venite*, one in Isaiah, "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come," &c.; another in the Gospel, Christ taking up His part in the concert, "Come unto Me all ye," &c.; yea, and to make up the anthem complete, the third Person comes in also, "the Spirit saith, Come;" and after that, all the inferior orbs are called in to bear their part in the chorus, "the Bride saith, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst, come: and *Quicunque vult* is the title of the hymn that they all join in, Whosoever will thus come,—let him be sure of the hospitable reception,—"Let him take the water of life freely." One signal evidence we

[Ps. xl. 7.]

Isa. lv. 1.

[Mat. xi. 28.]

Rev. xxii. 17.

have of God's special approbation of such vows, in Abraham's circumcising himself and posterity; that, you know, was the solemnity of his coming to God, the ceremony of his proselytism, the sacrament and seal of his resolute vowed obedience unto God, of his renouncing that *ἀθέμιτος εἰδωλολατρεία*, those abominable gentile impurities, the *περισσεία κακίας*, the unnatural excrescences of lust, which the rest of his idolatrous countrymen had long been guilty of, and which brought that fire and brimstone from heaven before his eyes upon some of them. Abraham it seems resolved and vowed against those heathen abominations, covenanted with God a life of purity, and to that end a going out of that polluted country; then sealed this covenant to God,—as the custom of the eastern nations was in leagues and bargains,—sealed it with blood; and see what an obligation this proves to God, not only to call him and account him a friend of God, to style Himself by him, as He doth here by Bethel, "I am the God of Abraham," through the whole book of God; but the obligation goes higher upon God, it prevails so far that He comes down Himself, and assumes flesh on purpose to seal back the counterpart of that indenture to Abraham in blood also, and in that, that He is his shield, and an exceeding great reward to all that shall but resemble him to the end of the world, in that faithful coming, that vowed resolution of obedience to His commands. The short of it is, these resolutions and vows, if they be sincere, not the light transient gleam, the sighs only that we are so ill, or wishes that we were better, but the *voluntas firma et rata*, the ratified, radicated, firm purpose of new life, even before it grow to that perfection as to bring forth the *καρποὺς ἀξίους*, the worthy, meet, proportionable fruits of such change, are instantly accepted and rewarded by God, with pardon of sin and justification; and so God is the God of Bethel, hath a particular respect to these vows and resolutions at the very making of them; and that was the first thing.

SERM. V. [Gen. xvii. 10.] [Gen. xv. 1.]

And so again, secondly, for the prospering them when they are made. He that gives himself up to God becomes by that act His pupil, His client, part of His charge and family, an orphan laid at His gates, that He is bound to provide for, engaged by that application, if once accepted, to be His

SERM. V.

patron-guardian; as among the Romans he that answers to the *κράζειν ἀββᾶ*, to the client's calling him father, is supposed to adopt, undertakes the protection of the *hæredipeta*, obliges himself to the office and real duty of a father. And I remember the story of the Campanians[d], that could not get any aid from the Romans against a puissant enemy; they solemnly came and delivered themselves up into the Romans' hands by way of surrender, that by that policy they might oblige the Romans to defend them, and espouse their cause, with a *si nostra tueri non vultis, at vestra defendetis*, if you will not lend us your help, preserve our region, yet now we are your own, you are obliged to do it, *quicquid passuri sumus, deditii vestri patientur*, whatsoever from henceforth we suffer, it will be suffered by your clients and subjects: and so certainly the resigning ourselves up into God's hands, the penitent sober resolution of "the Lord shall be my Lord," giving ourselves up not as confederates, but subjects, to be ruled as well as to be aided by Him; no such way in the world as that to engage God's protecting and prospering hand, to extort His care and watchfulness over us. He that comes out but resolutely into the field to fight God's battles against the common enemy, God and the angels of heaven are ready to furnish and fortify that man. Resolution itself, courage but upon its own score, is able to break through most difficulties, and the want of that is the betraying of most souls that come into Satan's power; but then over and above, the prospering influence of heaven that is still ready to assist such champions, the *κρυφαία χεὶρ*, which the LXXII puts in into the last verse of Exod. xvii., the secret invisible hand, by which God will assist the cordial Joshua, and have war against Amalek for ever, fight with him as long as Joshua fights, the co-operation of the Spirit of God with all that set resolutely about such enterprises of valour, His *συνεργεῖν* to our *ἐργάζειν*, this is a sure fountain of relief and assistance to such resolutions. Do but try God and

[d] [Ad ea princeps legationis, sic enim domo mandatum attulerant, Quandoquidem inquit nostra tueri adversus vim atque injuriam justa vi non vultis, vestra certe defendetis. Itaque populum Campanum urbemque Capuam, agros, delubra Deum, divina humanaque omnia in vestram Patres conscripti, populique Romani ditionem dedimus; quicquid deinde patiemur dediticii vestri passuri.—Liv. vii. 31.]

your own souls in this particular, for the vanquishing of any sin that your nature and temper is most inclined to. Take but the method of this text; come into God's presence, resolve sadly and advisedly in that Bethel never to yield to that sin again; resolve not only on the end, but the means also that are proper to lead thither; foresee and vow the same resistance to the pleasant bait that to the barbed hook under it, to the fair temptation, that to the horrid sin itself; and then those weapons that may be useful for the resistance, the fasting and the watching,—that are proper to the exorcising that kind of devil,—be sure to carry out into the field with thee, and in every motion of the battle let the Moses' as well as the Joshua's hands be held up, the sword of the Lord with that of Gideon, implore and importune that help of God's which hath given thee to will, to resolve, that He will continue His interposition, and give thee to do also, that having begun the good work in thee, He will not lose [Phil. i. 6.] the pledge, but go on also to perfect it: and whenever thou art next tempted to that sin, recall and remember this resolution of thine, bid that very remembrance of thine stand by on thy guard, and, if you please, by that token that this day I advised you to do so; and withal consider the temptation, that it is an express come just from Satan, that sworn enemy of souls, against which in God's presence the first time thou ever camest into the Church thou didst thus vow and profess open defiance and hostility, that this disguised fiend shakes a chain in hell, be his address to thee never so formal, and is now come on purpose to supplant or surprise thy constancy, to see whether thou considerest thy reputation with God or no, whether thou makest scruple of breaking vows and resolutions; and then, instead of treating with that sin, cry out to God to defend thee against it, either to give strength, or remove the temptation; and deal honestly and sincerely with thine own soul, betray not those helps that God thus gives thee in this exigence: and then come and tell me how it hath proved with thee. In the mean time, till thou hast made this experiment, be not too querulous of thine own weakness or the irresistibleness of sin; believe it, a few such sober trials and practisings upon anger, lust, and the like, and the benefit that would infallibly redound from thence, might

SERM. V.

bring the ancient Church order of episcopal confirmation into fashion and credit again; which had it but its due ingredients and advantages restored to it,—every single Christian, come to years of knowledge and temptations, in the presence of God and angels and fellow Christians repeating that vow in his own name which was made by his proxies at the font, and the blessings of heaven powerfully called down by those who have a title to the promise of being thus heard, —as it would by the way fully satisfy all the pretensions and arguments of the anabaptist, so would it also be a more probable effectual restraint for sin, than those which have so solemnly decried, or but formally practised, that institution, have taken care to afford us in its stead.

But then, thirdly, God is a God of resolutions, to exact performance of them; the paltering trifler in this kind hath all the vengeance of the God of Bethel belonging to him, all that pertains to the sacrilegious profaner of that temple which Himself had consecrated, the censure and reward not only of the impious, but the fools. "When thou vowest a vow, defer not to pay; God hath no pleasure in fools;" and, "It is a snare to a man to devour that which is holy," to profane that heart which is once consecrated to God, and after vows to make enquiry. To doubt of the performing, to falter in the execution of what is thus solemnly resolved in God's service, is the fetching the sacrifice from the altar, and is sure to bring the coal of fire along with it, the perfectest treachery to a soul that any sacrilegious enterprise can design it. And yet God knows how many such fools there be in the world, that solemnly resolve themselves to His service, come to the font to make, to the table of the Lord to repeat these vows, and all their lives after do but busy themselves to wipe off the water of one, vomit up, disgorge the other; bequeath themselves to heaven in the presence of angels, and then repent of the fact, and labour all their lives long to retrieve and recover themselves back again; and the Apostle hath given those men their doom, "it had been sure better for them not to have known the way of righteousness," never to have raised an expectation in heaven that they meant any kindness to it, than thus to cheapen it, and not come to the price of a little perseverance and constancy to go through

Eccles. v. 4.

Prov. xx. 25.

[2 Pet. ii. 21.]

the purchase. Had they never undertaken God's business, never put in for the title of friends and votaries, with a "Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest," they had not been perjured, though they had been profane: but now the affront is superadded to the crime, the contumely to the impiety, and all the spiritual desertion, withholding and withdrawing of grace, and consequently the *ἀδύνατον ἀνακαινίζειν*, the impossibility for such to renew or recover themselves, without some prodigy of new bounty from heaven, —which provokers have little grounds to expect,—is directly become their portion.

[Luke ix. 57.]

[Heb. vi. 4. 6.]

I have dwelt too long on the portal to Bethel, the general necessary resolutions or vows that are precursory to those other particularly qualified; I must in the last place be so just to the text and auditory, as to reserve a few minutes for those vows of building and endowing a house for God, which was but a free-will offering in Jacob, designed by him as a return of acknowledgment for God's care over him, if He shall bring him again to his father's house in peace; and so God hath a peculiar respect to such vows beyond all others, and in that relation, in the last place, *Ego Deus Bethelis*, "I am the God of Bethel."

[Gen. xxviii. 21.]

He that hath a long and a doubtful journey before him, a voyage of uncertainty and danger, and considers how little he hath of his own to contribute towards his convoy, how nothing but the benign gale from heaven to waft him safely thither,—and such certainly is the condition of some of us here at this time,—may well be allowed to call in and consult at Bethel, take directions from old Jacob here, how to set out and begin his journey; and that is with vowing a vow unto the Lord. This, I confess, was the main of my errand, which hath been thus prepared for and prefaced unto you all this while; and there is not a more prudent at once and Christian course, that hath more of piety and stratagem in it, nor a more agreeable, seasonable, proper use of the present distress, and an engagement on God to deliver us out of it, than thus to take ourselves now in the pliable season, and indent some acts of voluntary piety with heaven, most certainly and solemnly to be paid Him hereafter, whenever God shall so be with us as to return us home in peace, to restore

SERM. V.

us those halcyon days after which we are all so impatiently gasping. I say not with Jacob literally to build houses for God, material Bethels;—to design such stately structures in an age of destroying, were but a romance-project for any of us; nay, blessed be God, we need not a Solomon to erect, or Zorobabel to restore; a prop to preserve from falling will yet serve the turn;—but from this blessed copy every emulous, though weak hand to transcribe somewhat at the distance and in proportion to strength. One to undertake the building one room of such an house, a private προσευχὴ or oratory for God; I mean, to vow unto God the so many daily close retirements, by confession of sins and deliverances, to acknowledge in prostration of soul—if not of body also, to bear it company—the provocations that have whet God's glittering sword against us,—every man the plague of his own heart, the ἐμὸν ἔγκλημα, in the style of the ancient liturgies, "my fault, my exceeding great fault,"—and the fatherly goodness that shall have sheathed it again; and never to give over those constant returns of devotion,—with Daniel, three, nay,—with David, seven times a day, to keep some poor kind of proportion with such a deliverance: another, to vow the building a porch of such an house, when God shall furnish him with materials, where the poor may have but a dining place sometimes; I mean not the loose formal scattering of the crumbs of the table among them, but sequestering a set, and that a liberal part of all the revenue that God shall ever bestow, or now rescue out of the devourer's hand, and provide or preserve for us, that God in His poor members may have a first-fruits, a twentieth, a tenth, a fifth of all; every man out of the good treasure of his heart, not in obedience to any prescript *quotum*,—I shall be sorry to wrong any man so much, as so to change it from being his perfect free-will offering,—but as out of a heart attracted by heaven, a liberal, cheerful, heaven-like effusion; the constancy and equability of which, yea, and the performing it upon vow or promise, will yet be no blemish to it, or make it less like that of heaven, of divinity itself. But among all the epitomes of this Bethel, the *domicilia*, little (tents rather than) houses of God, which we are thus to consecrate and vow unto Him, here was one at Bethel that would never be

wanting, never left out in our thrivingest, sparingest vows, I mean that pure crystal breast of Jacob's that God so delighted to dwell in,—as He was by the poet supposed to do in poor Pyramus' cottage,—that plain, honest, well-natured, undisguised heart both toward men and God, emblematically expressed by those smooth hands of Jacob, the fair open Campania of even, clear, unintricated designs, far from the groves and meanders, the dark depths, the intrigues, the dexterities and subtleties and falsenesses of the merchant worldling. Might but this judgment that hath preyed and gnawed so long upon the bowels of the kingdom but pare the heart of the Englishman into such a plain equable figure, leave never an angle or involution in it, make us but those direct-dealing honest fools that we are reproached to be,—but God knows are not guilty of that gracious Jacob-like quality;—might it but have that benign influence upon us here present; might it return us home with this one vow in every of our mouths and hearts, to be for the rest of our lives the English Nathanaels, the true Israelites, in whom there is no guile; might but this last minute of my hour make this one impression, I shall not hope on a rude multitude, but I say on my present auditory, to be content to live and die with downright honest Jacob, thrive or perish on clear direct Israelitish principles,—which will, I doubt not, one day have the turn of thriving in this world, when every thing else hath the reproach of imprudent and improsperous, as well as unchristian, the dove advanced when the serpent is licking the dust,—and with Drusus[e] in Paterculus, instead of the artificer that would provide for the deep privacy,—that *sævi animi indicium* in the orator,—send for him that could design the diaphanous house, wherein there might be all evidence, every man thought fit to behold that without an optic or perspective, which will never be disguised or concealed from the eye of heaven; might we by the help of a fast vow now stricken, and with the blessing of God prac-

[e] [Cum ædificaret domum in palatio in eo loco ubi est quæ quondam Ciceronis, mox Censorini fuit, nunc Statilii Sisennæ est, promitteretque ei architectus, ita se eam ædificaturum, uti libera a conspectu, immunis ab omnibus arbitris esset, neque quisquam in eam despicere posset; tu vero inquit siquid in te artis est, ita compone domum meam ut quicquid agam ab omnibus perspici possit.—Vell. Paterc. ii. 14.]

SERM. V.

tised every hour of our lives after, come home to our father's house, old honest Jacob's plain tent, with peace and simplicity, cleanness, uncompoundedness of spirit,—a quality that would be able to commend and improve, christianize and bless that peace to us, and make it like that of God, a true and durable one;—I should then with all cheerfulness dismiss you with old Jacob into the hands of this God of Bethel, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, that owned and blessed the simplicity and fidelity, the plainness and the trustiness of those three patriarchs, before all the glorious wisdom and politics of the world; whose sincerity and whose reward, whose uprightness and acceptation, integrity and crown, God of His infinite mercy grant us all. To whom with the Son, &c.

SERMON VI.

THE NECESSITY OF THE CHRISTIAN'S CLEANSING.

2 Cor. vii. 1.

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves.

There is not, I conceive, any piece of divinity more unluckily mistaken, more inconveniently corrupted and debauched by the passions and lusts of men, made more instrumental to their foulest purposes, than that of the promises of Christ; whether by giving them the inclosure and monopoly of our faith,—the commands of Christ and the threats of Christ, which have as much right to be believed as they, His kingly and prophetic office, to which He was as particularly anointed as to that of our priest, being for the most part set aside as unnecessary, and by many steps and degrees at last not only left quite out of our faith, but withal fallen under our envy, become matter of quarrel against any that shall endeavour to obtrude them not only so impertinently, but so dangerously, either on our gospel, or on our practice,—or whether again by persuading ourselves and others that the promises of Christ are particular and absolute, confined to some few, and to those howsoever they be qualified; when the whole harmony and contexture of Christian doctrine proclaims directly the contrary, that they are general and conditional, a picture that looks every man in the face that comes into the room, but cannot be imagined to eye any man else, unrestrained to all so they shall perform the condition, and an ἐσφράγισται ταμιεῖα, those diffusive store-houses sealed up against all who do not perform it.

SERM. VI.

Shall we therefore have the patience, and the justice, and the piety awhile to resist these strong prejudices, to rescue this sacred theme from such misprisions, to set up the promises of Christ in such a posture as may have the safest and kindest influence, the benignest and most auspicious aspect upon our lives, not to swell and puff up our fancies any longer with an opinion that we are the special favourites to whom those promises are unconditionally consigned, but to engage and oblige our souls to that universal cleansing that may really enstate us in those promises, either of deliverance here or salvation eternally; that may, like the angel to St. Peter in prison, even to God Himself, shake off those gyves and manacles which have even encumbered His omnipotence, made it impossible for Him to make good His promises, temporal or spiritual, to such unclean uncapables as we? To this purpose there is one short word in the text which hath a mighty importance in it, the *ταύτας*, the 'these' annexed to the promises. What is the interpretation of that you must enquire of the close of the former chapter; and that will tell you, that upon coming out from the pollutions and villanies of an impure profane heathen world,—and such is our unregenerate estate, I would I could not say, such is the condition of many of us that most depend on God's promises,—on our going out of this tainted region, our strict separation from all the provoking sins of it, all the mercies of heaven and (which some have a greater gust and appetite to) of earth also, are become our portion, a most liberal hospitable reception; "I will receive you, and I will be a Father" to all such proselyte guests, "and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty;" as if His almightiness, which is here pawned for the discharge of these promises, could not bring them down upon us, unless by this coming out of Sodom,—to which this angelical exhortation was sent to rouse us—we should render ourselves capable of them.

[2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.]

In a word, the promises here, as all other in the Gospel, are not absolute, but conditional promises, on condition of "cleansing from all impurity," and not otherwise; and if there be in the whole world an engagement to cleansing, an obligation to the practice of the most defamed purity that a

profane age can scoff or rail at, this certainly may be allowed to pass for it. "Having therefore," &c. SERM. VI.

The words are an exhortation to cleansing, and in them you may please to observe these three particulars:

1. The ground.
2. The address.
3. The exhortation itself.

The ground the fittest in the world for this turn when you shall consider it thoroughly; ἐπαγγελίας ταύτας, "these promises."

The address, adding somewhat of sweetness to that of rational advice, "Having these promises, dearly beloved."

And the exhortation itself, in the remainder of the words at large in the whole verse. We shall content ourselves with the contraction of it, καθαρίζωμεν ἑαυτοὺς, "let us cleanse ourselves."

I begin with the first, the ground or foundation of the Apostle's exhortatory to cleansing, ἐπαγγελίας ταύτας, "these promises."

1. Promises.
2. And particularly, conditional promises.

And yet 3. more particularly, the conditional promises of this text, the "these promises" as they are set down in the end of the former chapter, are the most competent, most engaging, effectual arguments or impellents to set any Christian upon the work of Christian practice, that especially of impartial universal cleansing.

It will be best demonstrated if we take them asunder, and view them in the several gradations.

1. Promises are a very competent argument to that purpose, a bait to the most generous passion about us, our emulation or ambition, drawing us with the cords of a man, the most rational masculine allectives, I shall add,—to an ingenuous Christian man, as that signifies neither saint in heaven, nor beast on earth, but that middle imperfect state of a Christian here,—the most agreeable proper argument imaginable to set us a cleansing.

Two other arguments there are, both very considerable, I confess.

1. The love (in the moralist of virtue, but in the Chris-

SERM. VI.

tian) of God Himself, and that love, if it be gotten into our hearts, will be very effectual toward this end; "the love of God constrains us," saith the Apostle.

[2 Cor. v. 14.]

2. The fear of those threats, those formidable denunciations which the Gospel thunders out against all unmortified carnal men; that horrid representation of our even Christian's God, as He is still under the gospel,—to all unreformed, obdurate sinners,—"a consuming fire;" and consequently, what "a direful thing it is to fall into the hands of that living God:" and "knowing these terrors of the Lord, we persuade men," saith the same Apostle. There is some rousing oratory, some awakening rhetoric and eloquence in this also. And let me tell you, though it be but by the way, that I am not altogether of their opinion that think these terrors of the Lord are not fit arguments to work on regenerate men; that fear is too slavish a thing to remain in a child of light, a Christian. I confess myself sufficiently persuaded that our Apostle made choice of no arguments, but such as were fit to be made use of by Christians, and those terrors are more than once his chosen arguments, even to those that "had received the kingdom that cannot be moved," and are exhorted *χάριν ἔχειν*, "to have grace," to make use of that precious talent received,—which supposes a gracious person,—or possibly *χάριν ἔχειν*, "to be thankful" to this munificent donor for this inestimable gift, yea, and this duty raised to the highest pitch that a Christian is capable of, to serving God *εὐαρέστως*, whether that refer to the persons, and signify "serving with all cheerfulness" and alacrity and well-pleasedness, or to God, as we render it, "serving Him acceptably with reverence and godly fear;" you have still in this Apostle these terrors immediately annexed to enforce this duty, "for our God is a consuming fire." And so again you cannot but remember the advice of "working," and "working out salvation," and emphatically "our own salvation, with fear and trembling;" not only with love and faith, but peculiarly "fear and trembling," this trembling fit enough to accompany the saint to heaven gates, to salvation itself; and therefore the *ἀφόβως*, "without fear," in the first of Luke, which we ordinarily join with the *λατρεύειν*, as if we were thereby obliged to serve Him without fear, is in ancient copies and editions joined with the *ῥυσθέντας*, "that we being

[Heb. xii. 29.]
[Heb. x. 31.]
[2 Cor. v. 11.]
Heb. xii. 28.
[Phil. ii. 12.]
[Luke i. 74, 75.]

delivered without fear,"—i. e. without danger,—"might serve Him in holiness," &c. And so I think it is a little clear, that the fear which is so cast out by perfect love, that, as the Apostle saith, 1 John iv. 18, "there is no fear in love," is not the fear of God's wrath, but of temporal dangers and persecutions. For so that love to Christ, if it be perfect, such as Christ's was to us, chap. iii. 16,—and is referred to again, chap. iv. 17, "that as He is, so we should be in this world,"—will make us content to adventure any thing for the beloved, even death itself, the most hugely vast formidable,—as it is there, *τὰς ψυχὰς τιθέναι*, "to lay down our lives" for Christ,—but sure not the displeasing of God, and torments of hell; that were too prodigal an alms, too wild a romance valour, would have too much of the modern point of honour for St. John to prescribe, and so certainly is but misapplied to this business. And so still I cannot but think it wisdom and sober piety in him that said, he would not leave his part in hell,—the benefit which he had from these terrors,—for all the goods of this world; knowing how useful the flesh of the viper was to cure his poison, the torments to check the temptations, the apprehension of the calenture that attended to restrain from the pleasant but forbidden fruits that were always a soliciting his senses; and she that ran about the city,—that Novarnius tells us of,—with the brand of fire in one hand, and a bottle of water in the other, and said, "her business was to set heaven on fire with the one, and quench hell-flames with the other, that there might be neither of them left, only pure love to God to move or incite her piety," had certainly a little of the *flatus* thus to drive her, her spleen was somewhat swollen or distempered, or, if one may guess by her appearing in the street, she was a little too wild and aerial in her piety. But this by the way, as a concession that there is (not only love, but) fear also that may set men a cleansing, as well as the promises in the text; the denunciation of punishments is as considerable an act of Christ's kingly office, whereby He is to rule in our hearts by faith, as that of proposing rewards, that other act of regality, Rom. xiii. And the truth is, all is little enough to impress the duty: and happy is he that hath this threefold cord, this threefold obligation, paternal, and both kinds of regal, each

SERM. VI.

actually in force upon his soul; and eternally happy if either or all may effectually perform the work on him.

But then still, if we observe distinguishingly, and exactly apply and proportion the arguments to the imperfect Christian state, you shall find that promises are the most proper, congruous, agreeable argument, most apt and hopeful to do the deed, to have the impression upon the heart.

Fear is an argument, but to an ingenuous nature not altogether so appropriate.

Hope, the relative to promises, is more generous than that, more noble, more worthy of the Christian's breast, a person of so royal an extraction.

On the other side, the love of God, for His own sake, love of His attributes and excellencies, that admirable, dazzling, amazing beauty of His divine essence, O! it is a warming grace, infinitely melting and ravishing to those that have their hearts truly possessed with it.

But is not this, again, a little above the proportion of the imperfect, inchoate, very moderate state of the Christian in this life? is it not a little more proportionable to that of the future vision? The Christian, you know, here is made up of two contraries, the flesh and spirit, *ἐν συνωρίδι*, combined and yoked together; and as the fear may be too degenerous for the spirit, so the love of so transcendent a spiritual object will be far too elevated and generous for the flesh, it is not capable of so pure, angelical a guest.

This of hope is of a middle temper, and so a little more congruous and apportioned to the middle state, more ingenuous than fear, and not so elevated as love. Let hell be set open wide upon us on one side, and it is apt to swallow us up with horror and despair, and so that fear may miscarry and ruin us; let the transcendent excellencies of God be let loose on us on the other side, and they swallow us up again in ecstacy and amazement. When our Saviour comes into Peter's ship, clothed but with one ray of this infinite beauty, —the gracious miracle of the fish,—poor creature! he falls down at Jesus' feet with a "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man:" and the text gives the reason, for "he was astonished" at such a presence of His. And you know what Moses thought of seeing God's face, *ut videam et vivam!* he

[Luke v. 8.]

should be never able to outlive it. And as the beholding and the presence, so the high pitch of love let in by that beholding, fastened on the divine lustre; it is most-what too high for our earthly state, even for the regenerate Christian in this life. The beholding Him in the reflection, and the dark beholding, is that which in the Apostle's judgment is the richest portion we can aspire to in this life; and that is the beholding Him in His graces and in His promises, as hope is but a glimpse of vision; and thus we cheerfully and with delight to our very flesh, expect that glory which shall be revealed; not which is revealed already, or if it were, would burn up and calcine this flesh of ours, turn the natural into a spiritual body, could not consist with such tempered or constituted tabernacles as now we carry about with us. And let that serve for the clearing the first step in the gradation, that promises are a fit and proper argument to work upon our present state, to set us a purifying.

And O that this might be our use of promises! no flattering ourselves into hell with a claim of heaven, but as a crane or engine to raise us from the depth, fetch us from the lees of sin, and like the sun-beams on this earth of ours, to attract and force us up toward its region of purity; that as the philosopher in Eunapius was taller in his study, in time of speculation, than at any other time, so this meditation and study of this part of the book of life, the promises of Christ, might be able to raise us above our ordinary pitch or stature, to rarify and so to cleanse. "Having therefore these promises, let," &c.

2. Of all promises the conditional are fittest for this turn, to oblige and engage us to purifying. It is the property of conditional promises never to belong to any but those that perform the condition. That which Christ requires of us in the great indenture between Him and us, as the homage to be performed to Him on our part, be it never so slight and inconsiderable, never so despicable a peppercorn, so pitifully unproportionable to the great rent He might require, or to the infinite treasure of glory that He so makes over to us, that mite of obedience, of faith, of love, of purity, is yet most strictly required by Christ, even now—under the ἐπιείκεια of the gospel—to be performed to Him. The mercy and the

SERM. VI.

pardon and the huge moderation of that court, though it hath mollified the strict law into never so much chancery, will not proceed further, and mollify obedience into libertinism; it hath treasures of mercy for those who have not obeyed the law in the strictness of perfect unsinning obedience; the evangelical righteousness shall serve turn where the legal is not to be had; but then still there must be honest punctual payment of the evangelical; and without that, the gospel is so far from being gospel, message of mercy, embassy of promises, that it is but an enhancement and accumulation of much sorer punishments on them that have sinned against that, that have not obeyed the gospel of Christ. Our Saviour hath brought down the market, provided as easy bargains of bliss for us as could be imagined; but this being granted, you must not now fancy another further second Saviour, that must rid you of these easy gainful tasks, which the first in mere kindness and benignity to you hath required of you.

[1 Pet. iv. 17.]

Be heaven and the vision of God never so cheap a purchase, yet the *νόμος πίστεως*, the law of faith, of gospel, is as that of the Medes and Persians, that no unclean thing shall enter therein; and that without holiness,—*ἁγιασμὸς*, all one with the *καθαρισμὸς* in the text,—without that sincere, though never so imperfect, sanctification, without cleansing, mortifying here, no man shall ever see the Lord. Should any boisterous, unclean, unqualified invader, *βιάζειν οὐρανὸν*, break in on those sacred mansions, commit such riots, such burglary upon heaven; heaven must be unconsecrated by such violence, cease to be the palace of God, a place of purity or of bliss: and if this be not an argument fit to impress this duty, the necessity, but withal the ease of the performance, the no heaven without it hereafter, and yet the no grievance by it here, if this be not an obligation to cleansing, I know not what may be counted such. He that hath taken down all the promises of the gospel as absolute, unconditionate promises, that sees his name written indelible in the book of life, I know not through what tube or perspective, and resolves that all the provocations, and sacrileges, and rebellions against heaven, shall never be able to resist his nativity, to disturb his horoscope, to reverse his fatal

[Rev. xxi. 27.]

destined bliss, may well be excused, if he be not over-hasty to cleanse or purify.

It is an act of the most admirable power of the divine restraining or preventing grace, that some men that do thus believe this doctrine of unconditional promises, are yet restrained from making this so natural use of it, from running into all the riots in the world.

And certainly it is as irrefragable a convincing testimony of man's free will to evil, even after his reason and the spirit of God have offered him never so many arguments to the contrary, that many men which believe the conditionate promises, do not yet set resolutely a cleansing, the obligation hereto from reason being so direct and conclusive, that all the devils in hell cannot answer the force of it. Only our stupid, undisciplined, absurd, illogical hearts have the skill to avoid it, running headlong and wilfully after the old impurities, even then when they are most fully without all dubitancy resolved that all the joys of heaven are forfeited by this choice.

I have done with the second step in my gradation, the special convincing energy of the conditional promises to enforce cleansing.

Come we now to the third and last step in the gradation, the particularity of the 'these conditional promises,' in this text, promises of God's receiving us upon our separating, His being our Father, and we His sons and daughters, upon our coming out, &c., in the end of the former chapter.

God will not receive any uncleansed, polluted sinner, will not be a father to any, be he never so importunate or confident in his *κράζειν ἀββᾶ*, will not own him to any degree of son-ship, that doth not bodily set a purifying.

It was a virulent objection and accusation of the heathen Celsus against Christ, that He called all sinners to come unto Him, publicans, harlots, all, and had an hospitable reception for such; from whence his ignorance and malice was willing to conclude Christ's Church to be a sanctuary for such uncleannesses, a kind of Romulus' asylum, to be filled only with those inhabitants which all other religions had loathed and vomited out; and it was Zozimus' descant upon

SERM. VI.

Constantine, that he turned Christian because he had committed those crimes for which no other religion would admit expiation. But Origen in his admirable writings against that heathen's objections makes a distinction of invitations: "There is," saith he, "the invitation of the thief, and the invitation of the physician; of the thief, to get as many companions; of the physician, as many patients as he can; the first to debauch the innocent, the second to recall the lapsed, to cure the diseased; the former to continue and confirm them in their former impure courses, the latter to purge out and to reform all their impurities;" and the latter only was the interpretation and design of Christ's call, 'that of sinners to repentance,' the very language in this text, the "come out and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing." And so Christianity in Zosimus' style, but another sense than what he designed it, is *δόξα πάσης ἁμαρτάδος ἀναιρετικὴ*, "the strongest purgative in the world," the angel a hastening and leading out of Sodom with an escape, "fly for thy life, neither stay thou in all the plains," and then, and not till then, *κἀγὼ εἰσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς*, "and I will receive you."

[Matt. ix. 13.]

[2 Cor. vi. 17.]

[Gen. xix. 17.]

And so still the peculiarity of these promises, these of our being sons, or our being received, hath a most persuasive quickening force toward the duty of purifying. Will any man be content to be that abject from God, that loathed, refuse, reprobated creature, such an one that all the prayers of all the saints on earth, intercessions and suffrages of martyrs and angels in heaven, yea, the very gaping wounds and vocal blood of Christ upon the cross, I shall add, the minutely advocation and intercession of that glorified Saviour at the right hand of His Father, cannot help to any tolerable reception at God's hands? Can you have fortified yourself sufficiently against that direful voice of the "Go ye cursed into everlasting fire;" and not only not God, but not the so much as mountains or hills willing or able to receive you into any tolerable degree of mercy, not one Lazarus with one drop to cool the tip of a flaming tongue, but only the gaping insatiable pit, that irreversible abyss of pollutions and of horror, that region of cursings and torments, of sin and flames, the only hospital to receive thee? If thou canst think com-

[Matt. xxv. 41.]

[Luke xxiii. 30; Rev. vi. 16.]

[Luke xvi. 24.]

SERM. VI.

fortably of this condition, be well pleased to venture all this for the enlarging of thy carnal fruitions one minute longer, and withal disclaim the whole birth-right of thy Christendom, the dignity and inheritance of sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty; if thou dost not repent of thy long, tedious, prodigal march into the Egyptian far country only to accompany with swine, and be fed with their *κεράτια*, to which the advantages of sin are compared,—that wooden, unhealthy fruit of the *Carobe* or *arbor Ceratonia*, as Dioscorides and Pliny describe that which we render husks in the Gospel,—if, I say, we can upon deliberation prefer this starving and pining in the herd, before feasting and being embraced in the father's house, this portion of swine before that of sons, we have then a sufficient fortification against this argument in this text, a serious *supersedeas* for purifying: but upon no cheaper condition than this can it be sued out; you must give yourselves up to the certain fire and brimstone of Sodom, if you will still continue in the impurities and burnings of Sodom; not the least gleam of hope upon any terms but those of purifying. "Whosoever hath this hope on him," the this, that is, the conditional hope of seeing there, or here of being received by God, if it be *ἐλπὶς ἐπ' αὐτῷ*, "hope on God," "he purifies himself," saith St. John. If he do not purify, it is either,

[2 Cor. vi. 18.]

1 John iii. 3.

1. Not so much as *ἐλπὶς*, absolute throwing off, disclaiming all hope, perfect fury and despair; or if he have any hopeful thought about him, it is

2. None of the *ἐλπὶς αὕτη*, none of the rationable, grounded, conditional, but a flattering, fallacious, foundationless, because unconditionate hope, which the bigger it swells the more dangerous it proves; an aposteme or tympany of hope, made up either of air or putrid humour: and then *ᾗ πλέον ἐλπίζουσι, ταύτῃ μᾶλλον κακῶς ἔχουσι*, like the consumptive patient, the more he hopes the further he is gone, the more deeply desperate is his condition.

Or 3rd, no *ἐλπὶς ἐπ' αὐτῷ*, hope on Him, on God. It is a dependance on some fatal chain,—some necromantic trick, of believing thou shalt be saved, and thou shalt be saved,—nay, on Satan himself, some response from his oracle, that *ἐγγαστρίμυθος*, that wizard flesh within us, that hath thus

SERM. VI.

bewitched us to its false pleasures first, and then its fallacious hopes, the fatallest, horridest condition in the world: you may excuse the preacher and the Apostle, if it carry them both into a kind of *πάθος*, an outcry of love, and pity, and desire, to prevent this unremediable ruin to which thou art posting, to catch thee when thou art nodding thus dangerously, with a most affectionate, compassionate compellation of a "dearly beloved, let us cleanse." Which brings me to the second general, the address, adding somewhat of earnestness and somewhat of sweetness to the exhortation, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved."

The exhortation to purifying, reforming, mortifying of sins, is an effect and expression of the greatest kindness, sincerest love, and tenderest affection imaginable. You shall see this exemplified by the most earnest lover that ever was in the world. Will you believe the Holy Ghost? "Greater love than this hath no man shewed, than to lay down his life for his friend." Now our Saviour you know laid down His life,—somewhat more than the life of a mere man, the life of the *θεάνθρωπος*, that divine celestial person,—on purpose to fetch back this divine, but scorned, purity into the world again: "He gave Himself for us," saith St. Paul, "that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people," laid down His life for that only prize to which the Apostle here exhorts, this of purifying. You shall see it again, "God having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless us, in turning every one from his iniquities:" this turning from iniquities, the purifying in the text, was the prime end and design of Christ's coming into the world, of all His glorious offices, and the exercise of them, and that the most blessed work of mercy that could ever be meant to polluted souls; this turning is there the interpretation of His blessing of us, "to bless us in turning," &c. It were superfluous further to assist this truth, in shewing you what an act of benefaction and mercy, of charity and real blessing it is, to contribute in any the smallest manner to the mortifying of any sin in any; it is the rescuing him from the most noisome, miserable, putrefied, piteous condition in the world. The plagues of Egypt, the frogs, and flies, and lice, and locusts of Egypt, and the murrain and death of the first-

[John xv. 13.]

Tit. ii. 14.

Acts iii. 26.

born, were but the imperfect emblems of these unclean hated vermin in the soul, that devour all the fruit and corn of the land, all the Christian virtues and graces, despoil and depopulate all that is precious or valuable in it; and then what proud Pharaoh would not fall on his knees to Moses, to make use of his power with Heaven, to deliver him from such plagues as these?

And yet to see how quite contrary it is ordered in the world; God is fain to send suppliants to us, that we will but be content to part with an impurity, that we will but endure so huge a blessedness. You know we are ambassadors for Christ, and what is the nature of an embassage? why, setting up this impure unmortified sinner in a throne,—to have an embassy addressed to him, is an argument of a prince,—and not only men, but God Himself, as it were, prostrate before his footstool, the King of heaven to this proud reigning sinner on earth, to beseech him but to part with these weapons of his hostility against God, these provoking impurities; "as though God did beseech you by us,"—God Himself becomes the suppliant, and then we ministers may very well be content with the employment,—"we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God." Thus through the whole book of Canticles is the beloved husband of his Church most passionately a wooing her to this duty, to this opening to him, giving him an admission, all upon this score, that he might come in to bless and purify; and O what rhetoric is bestowed on her! far beyond the "dearly beloved" in this text, "Open to me, my love, my dove, my undefiled, my fair one:" he calls her fair and undefiled on purpose that he may make her such, and O that we had but that Saviour-like passion, that blessing kindness to our own poor perishing souls, some of those bowels of love to our own bowels! That we have not, is the greatest defect of self-love, the most contrary sin against our grand fundamental principle, that of self-preservation,—which can combine with the devil for the undermining and ruining and subverting of whole kingdoms, on that one commanding design of getting off the cross from off our own shoulders, on whomsoever it be laid, but cannot think fit to assist Heaven in purging out one refuse impurity out of the soul. Yet shall I not on such discouragements give it

[2 Cor. v. 20.]

[Cant. v. 2]

SERM. VI.

over as a forlorn impossible hope, but proceed one stage further on this errand, to the last general, the exhortation itself, *καθαρίζωμεν ἑαυτοὺς*, &c., "Let us cleanse ourselves." 1. cleanse, 2. ourselves, 3. us ourselves; the verb is active, the pronoun reciprocal, and the verb and pronoun both plural. And so, beside the duty itself of cleansing, two circumstances of this duty we must learn from hence, namely, 2, that it is the Christian's task upon himself, this of purifying: then, 3, that it ought to be the common united design of all Christians, the Apostle and people together, to assist one another in this work, this of purifying.

For the first, the duty itself, *καθαρίζωμεν*, "cleanse." This is not the actual acquiring, but the motion and proficiency and tendency toward purity.

And so there again you have two things:

1. What this purity is;
2. What this motion toward purity.

The purity is of two sorts; the first opposed to filth, the second to mixture: as the wine is pure, both when it is fetched off from the lees and dregs, and when it is not mingled with water. In the first notion, the purifying here, is the purging out of carnality; in the second, of hypocrisy; the first is the clean heart of David; the second, the right or sincere, single or simple spirit: the first from the filthiness of the flesh; the second, of the spirit: and you will never be prosperous alchymists, never get the philosopher's stone, never acquire the grand Christian hope, if you miscarry in either of these.

The first kind of purity again, that of the flesh, is twofold, proportionable to the two fountains and sources of carnality, *ἐπιθυμία* and *θυμὸς*, "lust and rage," that *κακίστη συνωρὶς*, "infernal pair," that hath so undermined the peace of souls and kingdoms.

Lust, the common parent both to all fleshly and all worldly desire, to the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye; the lust of the flesh again, either the warm, or the moist carnality, the burnings of the incontinent, or the thirsts of the luxurious; that deluge of fire and water, that had and shall have the honour to divide betwixt them the first and second ruin of the world. And for the lust of the eye, that cold dry

piece of sensuality, that strange kind of epicurism, that mad raving passion after stones and minerals, the deifying of that forlorn element, which, saith Aristotle, μόνη κριτὴν οὐκ εἴληφε, could never get any advocate to plead for it, that which struck Moses into such a passion, "these people have committed a great sin, have made them gods of gold;" this "love of the world and things of the world," extravagant desire, hot pursuit of such cold embraces,—like the embalmers in Herodotus, that had flames toward the chilled earth, the carcasses before them,—this dry juiceless sin, is yet able to pollute and defame the soul, as earth, you know, is as apt to foul and sully as any thing; covetousness is as irreconcilable with purity, as incontinence and intemperance, and all with the ἐπαγγελίας ταύτας, the "these promises" in the text. SERM. VI. [Exod. xxxii. 31.] [1 John ii. 15.]

So, in the second place, for that of rage, it is a fruitful teeming mother, which contains all the more sublimate kinds of carnality, pride, and ambition, and all the generation of those vipers, "hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, and the like," all prime "works of the flesh," though somewhat more volatile and aerial, i.e. have more of Satan and Lucifer in them than the other. Even he that but sides in religion, that makes that band of all charity and humility, an engine of faction or pride, that saith, "I am of Paul," &c.; is he not carnal? the most undoubted carnality in the world. A multitude of sins there are under this one head, able to bespot a man, a nation, into a leopard; and those spots are far from being the spots of sons, reconcilable with the promises of this text. But above all, one that pollutes in grain, that crimson dye, the guilt of blood, in which those souls that are rolled,—as every malicious, unpeaceable spirit certainly is, though he never had the courage to shed any,—look so direful in God's sight, that in comparison with them, the mire and mud of the basest swine may pass for a tolerable beauty; the blood of men, saith Psellus, yielding a fume or nidour that the devils,—and sure none but of their complexion and diet,—are fed and fattened with; and Maimonides to the same purpose, that it is the food of devils; that he that can feed on it, is a guest על שלחן השדים, "at the table of devils," and Gal. v. 20. ver. 19. 1 Cor. iii. 4.

SERM. VI.

literally guilty of that which St. Paul mentions so sadly, "I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils," partake of that Cyclops feast prepared, like hell, peculiarly for the devil and his angels,—those great Abaddons and Apollyons,—and cannot without injury and riot be snatched out of his hands, be swilled and wallowed in by us; those *Θυέστεια δεῖπνα*,—that were so scandalously charged on the primitive Christians, and cost Justin Martyr and Athenagoras such Apologies,—their feasting on one another's flesh: which charge should it be now resumed, and brought in by Turks or Indians against us Protestants,—as they say it is, but certainly will be, when it is told in Gath and Askelon,—good God! what should we do for an apologist?

1 Cor. x. 20.

Come we then in the last place to the last degree of purity, that which excludes hypocrisy or mixture, the sin which hath so dyed this nation, given it an heir-apparency to all the Pharisees' woes. Not only that notion of hypocrisy which in our ordinary speech hath engrossed the title, the vain-glorious publishing all our own acts of piety; Oh! that is but a puny degree of this sin; I know not whether I should not do well to give it some good words in comparison to its contrary, the desiring to appear more impure, more impious than we are,—that gross, confident, bold-faced devil, the far more dangerous of the two:—but, I say, the other more secret nice hypocrisy, the falseness to God, taking in rivals into the heart, the partial, halting, mutilate obedience, that which keeps a reserve for Satan, for mammon, for myself, when all should be given up to God; but above all, that yet profounder piece, the Egyptian temple, a most glorious fabric most piteously inhabited, nothing but cats and crocodiles within instead of gods; that of the painted sepulchre, the noisome, poisonous secrecy under the loveliest disguise, the vault or charnel-house of rottenness, of all the impurity in the world,—the deep-digged Golgotha and Aceldama,—under the fairest and most inviting inscription; that histrionical piece of the beasts' tragedy, the couchant, but ravening, wolves under the sheep's clothing, the god brought in for the basest services, the impurest contrivances in the world, and never pretended to, or thought on, till we had those vile

[Matt. vii. 15.]

employments for him; and this you will acknowledge sufficiently inconsistent with the purifying in this text, and so with the "these promises."

Having given you the severals of this purity by the contrary branches of the impurity, we come now to the *καθαρίζειν*, the notion of cleansing or purifying, that is here so vehemently required of us: and that is not the having acquired this purity, having attained any perfection of this state in either kind; but only the being on the way, the constant motion and growth, a setting out, and progress and proficiency in it, a daily purging and rinsing of the soul, that good innocent kind of *ἡμεροβάπτισμος*, that pardonable pharisaism of assiduous washings; a daily slaughtering of the great defilers one after another, one day of execution for lust, another for rage; one for the impurities of the tongue, the oaths, the lies, the profanations, the blasphemies, the noisome unsavoury discourses,—blessed Lord, that this might but be the day of demolishing that Babel of strange heathen languages, the least degree of which is intolerable among Christians!—another for the impurities of the eye, and a whole ocean of purgations little enough for that; but above all, an every-day care for the drying up the great fountain of leprosy in the heart. In a word, a firm ratified resolution of mortifying and crucifying, a devoting and consecrating all, and making as much speed with them as we can. To that end, though the perfect purity be not acquired, yet must these three essays be made toward it, these three degrees of ascent and proficiency observed:

1. Barring up the inlets, obstructing the avenues against all future breakings in of the great polluters, the resisting all fresh temptations,—by the remembrance how dear they have formerly cost our souls, what floods of tears, if we have done our duty, what a whole shop of purgatives to get out one spot so contracted,—but especially, stopping the recurrence of the old profane polluted habits, that *ὗς εἰς βόρβορον*, the cleansed swine returned to her old beloved wallowing again. [2 Pet. ii. 22.]

2. Our daily, minutely recourse to that *digitus Dei*, "finger of God," which alone, say the Jews, can cleanse lepers, with a "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make us clean;" Thou [Luke v. 12.]

SERM. VI.

canst prepare new Jordans of grace beyond all our rivers of Damascus, new banks, new treasures of purity.

And then 3, taking the seasonable advice of the Syrian servants, going down and washing in that Jordan, acting upon ourselves by the power of this grace, thus fitly co-operating with God to the utmost of our derivative strength; not lying like cripples on the bank when we have a Bethesda before us, which yet will cleanse none but those that go into it. And that brings me to the former of the two circumstances,—belonging to this duty,—denoted by the ἑαυτοὺς, cleanse 'ourselves,' that it is the Christian's task upon himself, this of purifying; καθαρίζωμεν ἑαυτοὺς, "let us cleanse ourselves."

It is the prerogative of the grace of Christ, that he that is vouchsafed his portion of that, is thereby thus enabled to mortify sin, and advance toward purity; and it is the duty of all that are thus vouchsafed and dignified, to make use of that strength to that end, to purify themselves. For as Aquinas observes out of Aristotle, that those things are possible for us, which are possible by our friends, so what we are enabled to do by the grace of Christ, we are able to do. He that is born of God, is born an athleta and victor, the whole world is but a pigmy before him; this is the privilege of that high descent, that be he the impotentest creature in the world, considered in his natural, carnal, or moral principles, either as "born of blood, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man," he hath yet an acquisition of a kind of omnipotence, from the derived communicated strength of Christ, as he is born of God; ἰσχύει πάντα, "he can do all things through Christ that strengthens him." God by His preventing and subsequent grace, works in the Christian to will and to do merely of His good pleasure of bounty; and then the exhortation belongs to that Christian, to "work, and work out his own salvation."

[John i. 13.]

[Phil. iv. 13.]

[Ibid. ii. 12.]

And were but the care and pains employed in the using and improving those talents which God hath given us, and calling to heaven for supplies, which is mis-spent and paltered away in pleading our impotencies and disabilities, and wants of grace,—that is, in accusing, in the old heathen style, God's illiberal dealing with His children,—charging Heaven with

all our failings,—we might certainly reap better fruit of our time, be fairer proficients in this art of purging; and in the mean may spend our spirits most profitably in calling and hastening one another to this so possible, and withal so necessary, task; and that is the last particular, that it ought to be the united design of all Christians, the Apostle and people together, to aid and assist one another in this work of purifying, by entreaties, by exhortations, by all the engagements of love and duty; *καθαρίζωμεν ἑαυτοὺς*, "let us cleanse ourselves."

The work, it is acknowledged, though possible to be gone through with, in such a measure as shall be sure of acceptance, is yet of some more than ordinary difficulty. How long hath this poor nation been about it? So many years in the refiner's fire, in God's furnace for purifying, worn out and rent to pieces under the fuller's soap; and yet, God knows, as full of dross and spots as ever, the poor leper-kingdom thrust out of the camp,—the temple,—banished from the old privileges of the Israelite, the oracle and the service of God, God spitting in the face of it, in Moses' style,—a kind of excommunicate state,—all on that charitable purpose, that it might be ashamed and apply itself to the priest, to God for His purgatives; I shall add, looked upon, prayed over by that priest so many years together; and that cure still as far from being perfected as ever, the leprosy spreading in the skin, the sins multiplying under the priest's inspection, under God's rod; at the end of a seven years' rinsing,—not with soap, but nitre,—a thousand times more odious spots, more provoking sins, more hellish impurities, than before. I remember what poor Porphyry was fain to do in pursuit of purgatives, the same that Saul after the commission of his sin that rent the kingdom from him, betake himself *εἰς θεουργίαν καὶ γοητείαν*, to magic and conjuring, make friends to the devil to help purify him. O that we, having met with luckier prescriptions,—recipes from heaven, that would be sure to prove successful,—would not betray all, for want of applying them, that while it is called to-day, while a poor spotted kingdom lies a gasping, the benefit of the last plunge, the *φύσεις ἰητραὶ*, might not be quite let slip, that this of purifying, the only true expedient yet untried,—whilst

SERM. VI.

all others are experimented to be but mere empirical state mountebankery,—might at length be thought on, prosecuted with some vigour, every man entering into the retirement of his own breast, there to search and view the spotted patient, the plague, the leprosy of his own heart! and again, every man making his arts of cure as communicative and diffusive, as charitable and catholic as he can; that as David was ravished with joy, when they said unto him, "Let us go into the house of the Lord,"—that pleasant news and spectacle, a conspiration for piety,—so we for that only errand that sends us all to that house, the beginning and advancing of purity; every man, like an Israelite in his flight from Egypt, not only going out in haste,—a passover toward purity,—but also despoiling his Egyptian neighbours, robbing one of his lusts, another of his detractions, one of his atheistical oaths, another of his swinish excesses, one of his infidel tremblings and basenesses, another of his covetings and ambitions, his jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiments, his most valued precious sins,—the curses with which he hath clothed himself as with a garment, and which would one day, if they were not snatched from him, come like scalding water into his bowels, and oil into his bones,—and so yet, if it be possible, come out a troop, a legion of naked wrestlers, a whole shoal of candidates toward purity. Till somewhat be done this way, more than hitherto hath been done, peace may hover over our heads, express its willingness to light upon us; but *ad candida tecta columbæ*, that dove will not enter or dwell where purity hath not prepared for her: or if she should so unlearn her own humour, it were danger she would turn vulture, that most desirable blessing prove our fatallest curse, leave us in and to a state of all impurities, to deprecate and curse those mercies that had betrayed us to such irreversible miseries. Lord, purge, Lord, cleanse us; do Thou break those vessels of ours that will not be purified; cast us again into what furnace Thou pleasest, that we may at length leave our dross, our filth behind us: and having used Thine own methods toward this end, and purged our eyes to see that it is Thou that hast thought this necessary for us, that hast of very mercy, very fidelity thus caused us to be troubled, work in us that purity here, which may make us

[1 Kings viii. 38.]

[Ps. cxxii. 1.]

capable of that vision, that peace, that fulness of sanctity and glory hereafter; which God of His infinite abyss of purity grant us all; to Whom, with the Son, that image of His Father's purity, and the holy, sanctifying, purifying Spirit, &c.

SERMON VII.

BEING A LENT SERMON AT OXFORD, A.D. 1643.

CHRIST AND BARABBAS.

John xviii. 40.

Not this Man, but Barabbas.

SERM. VII.

This passage of story not unagreeable to the time,—every day of Lent being a προπαρασκευὴ to the passion week,—hath much of the present humour of the world in it, whether we consider it as an act of censure, or as an act of choice: both these it is here in the Jews.

1. An act of popular censure, i. e. most perfect injustice, very favourable to the robber, and very severe to Christ; Barabbas may be released, the vilest wretch in the world, one that was attached for robbery and for insurrection, may become the people's favourite, be pitied and pleaded for, and absolutely pardoned: *dat veniam corvis*[a], the blackest devils in hell shall pass without any of our malice, our indignation, our animosities; but an innocent Christ, or any of His making, one that comes from heaven to us, upon errands of holiness, of reformation, that by authority of His doctrine and example would put vice out of countenance, discover our follies, or reproach our madnesses, and in the Wise Man's phrase, "upbraid our ways, and reprove our thoughts," He that hath no sins to qualify Him for our acquaintance, no oaths, no ribaldry to make him good company, none of the compliances or vices of the times to commend him to our friendship, at least to our pardon, none of that new kind of popularity of being as debauched and professedly vicious as other men, shall

[Wisd. ii. 12, 14.]

[a] [Juv. ii. 63.]

be suspected, and feared, and hated, the most odious, unpardonable, unsufferable neighbour, "grievous unto us even to behold." Innocence is become the most uncomely degenerous quality, virtue the most envious, censorious thing; the not being so near hell as other men, the most ridiculous scrupulosity, and folly in the world. And the misery of it is, there is no discoursing, no reasoning this humour out of us, they had cried once before, and the crossing doth but more inflame them; the charm, that should have exorcised, doth but enrage the evil spirit, "Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas." SERM. VII. Wisd. ii. 15.

But besides this, I told you, these words might be taken in another notion, and under that it is that we are resolved to handle them, as an act of the Jews' choice, of their absolute unconditionate decree, their loving of Barabbas, and hating of Jesus, not before they had done either good or evil, but after one had done all the evil, the other all the good imaginable; then hating the Jacob, and loving the Esau; electing the robber, and rejecting the Saviour; the Barabbas becomes a Barabbas indeed, according to the origination of the name, a son of a father, a beloved son in whom they are well pleased, a chosen vessel of their honour, and Christ the only refuse vessel of dishonour, the only unamiable, undesirable, formless, beautiless reprobate in the mass: *Non hunc, sed Barabbam,* "Not this man," &c. [Rom. ix. 11, 13.]

In the words under the notion of the choice, you may please to take notice of these severals:

1. A competition precedaneous to this choice, presumed here, but expressed in St. Matthew, τίνα θέλετε ἐκ τῶν δύο, "which of the two will ye," &c. [Matt. xxvii. 17.]

2. The competitors, Barabbas and Christ.

3. The choice itself, not only preferring one before the other, *non hunc, sed,* but 1. absolutely rejecting of one, *non hunc,* not this man; and then by way of necessary refuge pitching upon the other, *Non hunc, sed Barabbam,* "Not this man, but Barabbas."

And of these in this order.

And first, of the first, that there is a competition, before what the competitors are, or what the choice.

1. I say that there is a competition, a canvass, or plying,

SERM. VII.

before we come to choose any thing; this is a truth most constantly observable, in all which we are most concerned in, in that transcendent interest, the business of our souls. Were there but one object represented to the faculty, one Christ, one holiness, one salvation, the receiving Him would be any thing rather than choice; chance it might be, or necessity it might be; chance it might be, that such a thing had the luck to come first, to prepossess and forestal us, to get our favour when there was nobody else to sue for it; and indeed he that should be godly, or Christian on such a felicity as this, through ignorance only, or non-representation of the contrary, he that should give his voice unto Christ, because there was nobody else to canvass for it, that if Mahomet had plied him first, would have had as much faith for the Alcoran, as he hath now for the Bible, been as zealous for a carnal, sensual, as now for a pure spiritual paradise; he that if he had been born of heathen parents, or put out to nurse to an Indian, would have sucked in as much of Gentilism, as by this civil English education he hath attained to of the true religion, that hath no supersedeas, no fortification against worshipping of sun and moon, posting from one heathen shrine,—as now from one sermon,—to another, but only that Christianity bespake him earliest, that idolatry was not at leisure to crave his favour, when Protestancy got it; is, I confess, a Christian, he may thank his stars for it, *planetarius sanctus*, a saint, but such an one as a Jew would have been, might he have been a changeling stolen into that cradle, or the most barbarous China infidel, had he had (as he of old, *fortunam Cæsaris*, so) *fortunam Christiani*, the Christian's fortune to have tutored him. And so for virtue and sinlessness also, he in whom it is not conscience, but bashfulness and ignorance of vice, that abstains only from uncreditable or unfashionable, from branded or disused sins, swears not, only because he hath not learnt the art of it, hath not yet gotten into the court, or into the army, the schools where that skill is taught, the shops where those reversed thunderbolts, so tempestuously shot against heaven, are forged; he that is no drunkard, no adulterer, no malicious person, only *quia nemo*, because he hath no company to debauch, no strength to maintain, no injury to provoke the uncommitted

sin; is all this while but a child of fate, born under a benign aspect, more lucky, but not more innocent, more fortunate, but not more virtuous than other men.

Again, if there were no competition, as it might be chance, so it might be necessity too; thou art fain to be virtuous, because thou canst be nothing else, goodness must go for thy refuge, but not thy choice, were there no rival sin, no competitor lust to pretend for thee.

It is therefore not only an act of wisdom, but of goodness too, observable in God's wonderful dispensation of things under the Gospel, to leave the Christian, *ἐν μεθορίῳ*, in the confines of two most distant people, improvable into good, and capable of evil, like Erasmus' picture at Rome, or that vulgar lie of Mahomet's tomb at Aleppo betwixt two loadstones, *ἀμφισβήτημα θεοῦ καὶ δαιμόνων*, as Synesius calls it, a stake between God on one side, and all the devils in hell on the other, made up of a Canaanite and an Israelite, a law in the members as well as a law in the mind, or as Antoninus[b], *πείσεις ἐν μορίοις*, persuasions in the members, many topics of rhetoric, many strong allectives to evil in the lower carnal part of the man, as well as invitations and obligations to good in the upper and spiritual. Thus did God think fit to dispose it, even in paradise itself, the flesh tempted with carnal objects, even before the first sin had disordered that flesh; a palate for the sweetness of the apple to please, and an eye for the beauty to invite, as well as an upper masculine faculty, a reason for commands to awe, and threats to deter; yea, and it seems in heaven itself, and the angels there, where is no flesh and blood, that *officina cupidinum*, shop or workhouse of desires, yet even there is an inlet for ambition, though not for lust, a liableness to the filthiness of the spirit, though not of the flesh, or else Lucifer had still stood favourite, could never have forfeited that state of bliss. And so it is ever since in this inferior orb of ours, "Behold, I set before thee life and death, blessing and cursing," on one side all the joys of heaven to ravish and enwrap thee, the mercies of Christ to "draw thee with the cords of a man, with the bands of love," to force and violence thy love by loving thee first, by setting thee a copy

[Rom. vii. 23.]

[2 Cor. vii. 1.]

[Deut. xxx. 19.]

[Hos. xi. 4.]

[b] [*αἰσθητικῶν πείσεων.* Antonini ad seipsum, lib. iii. cap. 6.]

SERM. VII.

of that heavenly passion to transcribe, but then withal death in the other scale, death which it seems hath something amiable in it too, it would not be so courted else, a *πορφύρα τοῦ σκότους*, as Macarius styles it, a gallantry of hell, a purple garment of darkness, that such shoals of men, and I tremble to think and say, so large a quantity of baptized Christians are so ambitious of, sell all that is comfortable and valuable in this life, to purchase it: and were there not both these set before us by God, life on one side, and death on the other, blessing on one side, and cursing on the other, a double canvass for thy soul, a rivalry, a competition, and somewhat on both sides amiable to somewhat in thee, life to the immortal, death to the perishing part of thee, blessing to the rational divine, cursing to the bedlam brutish part of thee, the man of God could not go on as he doth in that place, "therefore choose life, that thou and thy sons may live." Were there but one in our reach, it were necessity still and not choice, and that most absolutely destructive of all judgment to come; hell might be our fate, but not our wages, our destiny, but not our reward, and heaven any thing more truly than "a crown of righteousness."

Deut. xxx. 19.

[2 Tim. iv. 8.]

A piece of the philosopher there hath been a long while in the world, that hath had a great stroke in debauching the divine, that the understanding doth necessarily and irresistibly move the will, that whatever hath once passed the *judicium practicum*, got not only the assent of the judgment that it is true, but the allowance also that it is good and fit to be chosen, cannot choose but be desired and prosecuted by the will; from whence the divine subsumes, that where faith is once entered, though that but a speculative (I wish it were not sometimes but a phantastical) faith, there works must and will infallibly follow. I confess it were admirable news if this were true, if all that know these things were sure to do them, if there were no such thing possible as sin against light, sin against gospel, sin against conscience; if the lives of believers could not prove infidel, the actions of those that acknowledge God, that make no doubt of the truth of Christianity, could not avoid or escape being God-like and Christian, if it were but a flash of St. Augustine's wit, that the wicked infidel believes contrary to faith, the wicked

[John xiii. 17.]

believer lives contrary to it; there were then but one care left a Christian, to be catechized aright, which the Solifidian calls faith; or to be confident of his own election, which the fiduciary calls faith; and then *Quis separabit?* any thing else will be wrought in me by Christ, or that any thing else will be unnecessary to be wrought. Instead of this pagan principle that ties up all in the chains of inevitable fate, if it be examined, give me leave to mention to you one aphorism of Christian philosophy, which is but the interpretation of the competition that now I speak of; that the will is no more necessitated to obey the suggestions of reason, than of the sensual appetite, of the upper than the lower soul, that it is an indifferent middle faculty, able to choose the evil and refuse the good, or,—to satisfy the philosopher's importunity, which resolves it impossible to choose the evil, unless under the appearance of good, you may take it in a clearer notion,—able to choose the pleasant and refuse the honest, to choose the sensual carnal, and refuse the intellectual spiritual good. And that you may see the ground of this, observe that the whole man is made up of three parts, spirit, soul and body.

[Is. vii. 15, 16.]

[1 Thess. v. 23.]

1. The body or flesh lusting against the spirit. And 2. the spirit again lusting against the flesh. Those two extremes perfectly contrary one to the other in their appetites, and therefore called by the ancients, ἄρρεν, and θῆλυ, one the masculine, the other the feminine part, one the monarch in the soul, the other the ὁ δῆμος, or commonalty; one the παιδαγωγὸς, the master, the other the παιδίον, or child; one the Θεὸς ἐν ἡμῖν, the voice and image of God in us, the other the θηρία, the bestial part; one the man, the other the τετράποδα, the four-footed creatures in us. And these are contrary the one to the other, so that you cannot do, or, as the Greek, ἵνα μὴ ποιῆτε, so that you do not, this is a consequent of that contrariety, you do not the thing that you would; i. e. perhaps perfectly, purely without some tack or mixture, however I am sure, not quietly, stilly, without some opposition of the other. And then comes in in the third place, ψυχὴ, the soul, the elective faculty, i. e. the will betwixt them, courted and solicited by both, as that which hath the determining casting voice; if the beast can carry it, if the sensual suggestions get the consent of the

[Gal. v. 17.]

SERM. VII.

will; obtain the embrace, have its carnal proposals yielded to; then in the Apostle's phrase lust conceives, and within awhile proceeds from consent to act, bringeth forth sin; but when the spirit prevails, when the reason, the conscience, the God within thee, is allowed to be heard, when that chaste, sober, matronly spouse gets the embraces, the consent of the will, then the spirit conceives, and from thence spring all the καρποὶ πνεύματος, which the Scripture speaks of, the fruits and productions of the spirit. You see now the competition, the constant importunities and solicitations, the rivalry for thy soul, not an action of moment or importance in thy life, but the house is divided about it, the spirit for one way, and the flesh for another, and that that prevails, i. e. gets the will of its side, denominates the action, and the action frequently and indulgently reiterated, denominates thee either flesh or spirit, either captive to the law of sin, or obedient to the commands and dictates of Christ, a carnal sinner, or a spiritual disciple.

[Jas. i. 15.]

[Gal. v. 22.]

And then my brethren, by way of use:

1. You see the answer to that hard problem, what is the reason and ground of the infiniteness of those punishments that await sinners in another world: here you have the oil that maintains that accursed vestal fire, so much beyond Tulliola's or Pallas' lamp in Licetus, burning so many ages under ground and not consumed; I mean, this competition in this text,—the τίνα θέλετε ἐκ τῶν δύο, which of the two infinites will you,—and that other we mentioned of life and death, blessing and cursing, set before us by God, the leaving to our option whether of the two infinites we will have; this, and nothing but this, hath made it most perfectly reasonable, that despisers should perish eternally, that he that will contemn immortal life, that τὸν ἐν χερσὶν αἰῶνα[c], as Clemens, St. Paul's contemporary, calls it, that eternity put into our hands by Christ, and make his deliberate covenant with death, that his immortal part may die eternally, should be thought worthy, as the book of Wisdom hath it, to take his portion or part with it. And then,

[Acts xiii. 41.]

[Wisd. i. 16.]

[c] [ὥστε οὖν ἀδελφοί μου, ἀγωνισώμεθα εἰδότες ὅτι ἐν χερσὶν ὁ αἰών· καὶ ὅτι εἰς τοὺς φθαρτοὺς ἀγῶνας καταπλέουσιν πολλοί, ἀλλ' οὐ πάντες στεφανοῦνται, εἰ μὴ οἱ πολλὰ κοπιάσαντες καὶ καλῶς ἀγωνισάμενοι.—S. Clem. Ep. ii. cap. 7. ἀγὼν seems to be a probable emendation of αἰὼν in this passage.]

SERM. VII.

2. O how much the more care, and caution, and vigilance will it require at our hands, to keep guard over that one faculty, that spring of life and death, that fountain of sweet and poisonous water, that of choosing or rejecting, willing or nilling; never to dispense those favours loosely or prodigally, never to deny them rashly or unadvisedly, but upon all the mature deliberation in the world! "keep thy heart with all diligence," the heart this principle of action, keep it above all keeping, "for out of it are the issues of life." That "when I would do good, evil is present with me," temptations of the carnal appetite to the contrary, it matters little, so I hold off my consent, resist their importunity; and that all the devils in hell are a whispering blasphemy within me, it matters as little, so I reject the suggestions. Resist, and he shall fly; that he is loose to tempt, this is my infelicity perhaps, but not my guilt, aye and that mishap improved into a blessing, ἐδόθη σκόλοψ, this tempter a kind of donative of heaven, to busy my patience, and exercise my vigilance, to set out my Christian valour, to make me capable of the victory first, and then the crown; the nations left "to prove Israel," yea and to "teach them war, at least such as before knew nothing thereof." Only be sure that those nations get not the upper hand; to that purpose that they be not pampered and fed too high, till they grow petulant and unruly, that this *jumentum hominis*, as St. Jerome calls it, this ass, or beast-part of a man, prove not the rider's master: this is the greatest danger first, and then reproach in the world, which you will more discern if you proceed from the competition to the competitors, and consider who they are, in us spirit and flesh, God and devil, as in the Jews Barabbas and Christ, my second particular.

Prov. iv. 23. [Rom. vii. 21.] Judg. iii. 1, 2.

It is none of the least of God's mercies among His dispensations of providence, that the competition falls to be betwixt such persons so acknowledgedly distant, and hugely contrary, a Christ and a Barabbas; the one so precious, and the other so vile, the Prince of peace, and the author of an insurrection, a σωτὴρ and an ἀπολλύων, "a Saviour" and "a destroyer;" had it been betwixt a Christ and a Nicodemus, a carpenter's son and a rabbi or ruler in Israel, the choice might have been more difficult, or the mistake more pardon-

[Is. ix. 6.]

SERM. VII.

able; but "so God loved the world," such were the riches of His goodness to an infatuated rebellious people, He sets before them a beautiful Christ, and an odious foil to make Him more beautiful, to make it impossible for them to be so mad, as to refuse and finally to reject Christ, that was on such grounds, and in such company, a suing and importuning for their favour; none but a Barabbas to pretend against Him, that that notion had of Him might serve instead of the fish's gall to recover the blind Tobit's sight, help the blindest natural man to discern somewhat tolerable, if not desirable in the Christ, that in so poor a choice, an undervalued, prejudged, scandalous Jesus might have leave to be considered, and owe a preferment *alienis vitiis* to the faults of the other, though not *virtutibus suis* to any thing amiable or estimable in Himself. The same economy you may generally observe even from the first of paradise to this day; when our first parents were the prize, the competitors were of somewhat a distant making, God and the serpent, not the King of heaven and one of His chief courtiers, God and an archangel of light, but God and a damned spirit, a black prince, and he but in very homely disguise, but of a serpent, which though he were then a τετράποδον, as Cedrenus out of some of the ancients will have it, somewhat a taller and goodlier creature than now the serpent is, that his legs be cut off, yet the text saith, a beast for all that, aye and that beast branded for craft, infamous for the subtilest creature, and so not likely to prove the most honest and solicitous of their good; and this cunning Pytho had made friends to speak, contrary to his kind, there was sure some sorcery in that; and all this, one would think, was enough to have added authority to God by such a prejudged competitor. And just so was it to the Israelites at their coming out of Egypt, God and a cruel Pharaoh, a deliverer and a tyrant, one to have them slaves in Egypt, the other to have them princes in Canaan; a sufficient inequality betwixt the pretenders, that it might be impossible for any to prefer the onions and the garlick, before the manna and the kingdom. After, it was betwixt God and a golden calf, a calf still, no very honourable creature, though it were of gold; and anon betwixt God and a brazen serpent, serpent and brazen too, neither form nor metal to

[John iii. 16.]

[Tobit vi. 8.]

[Gen. iii. 1.]

[Exod. xxxii. 4.] [2 Kings xviii. 4.]

SERM. VII.

commend it; and all along through the heathen world the competition was yet more unequal, betwixt the God of heaven, and wood and stone of the earth, the most glorious Creator, and vilest creature, nay the piece of wood, as the prophet sets it, that was not fit for any use, not so much as to be burnt, the very refuse of the refuse is the thing the idol was made of, and none but that idol thought fit to be a competitor with God for the adoration. If you look back to Judea again, at the time of the great competition for the hearts of Israel betwixt Rehoboam and Jeroboam, it was still of the same making, betwixt a king's son and a servant, a right heir and a cunning seducer, a kind of serpent again; yes, and betwixt the glorious temple of Jerusalem on one side, and the upstart Dan and Bethel on the other, the high-priest on one side, and the basest of the people on the other, betwixt the calves at that Dan, and the cherubims at that Jerusalem; and so still there was advantage enough, one would think, on God's side, against such competitors. And if we look now abroad into the most idolized adored Dianas, the sins that get all the custom away from Christ, the only rivals with Him for our souls, we shall find them but little advanced above that old pitch, little lovelier than the serpent, just such are our crafts, our unsanctified counsels, our wily artifices, that have nothing but serpent in their composition; little honourabler than the calf, just such are our gods of gold, which I cannot mention, but in Moses' passion, "O this people have committed a great sin, have made them gods of gold!" all piety transformed and contracted into the worship of that one shrine, our gain the only godliness we can hear of: and then a multitude more, of a yet viler making, fit only for a competition with that knotty refuse piece of wood of which the idol was made: the more shame they should outvie a most glorious God, a Christ, that if He had nothing in His life amiable, yet hath died for us, and so hath dearly purchased a title to our love, yea and a blessed spirit, come down on purpose to sublime our judicative faculty, to convince the world of the unreasonableness of sin; yea, and a poor thirsty panting soul,—which hath some reason to expect kindness from us,—a heaven and an immortal bliss.

[Is. xliv. 15—17.] [1 Kings xii. 27; xiv. 30.] [Ibid. xii. 29.] [Exod. xxxii. 31.] [1 Tim. vi. 5.]

Consider but a few of that glittering train of reigning sins

SERM. VII.

in this our land, in this my auditory, and be astonished, O earth, that they should ever be received in competition with Christ. The oaths, that all the importunity of our weekly sermons turned into satires against that sin, cannot either steal or beg from us, what gain or profit do they afford us? which of our senses do they entertain, which of our faculties do they court? an empty, profitless, temptationless sin, sensuality only to the devil part in us, fumed out of hell into our mouths in a kind of hypochondriacal fit, an affront to that strict command of Christ, His *ego autem* to His disciples, "but I say unto you," Christians, "swear not at all:" the best quality that it can pretend to, is that that Hierocles of old mentions with indignation, *πρὸς ἀναπλήρωσιν λόγου*, to fill up the vacuities of the speech, to express and man a rage, i. e. to act a madman the more perfectly. And of him that hath in his time sworn over all the hairs of his head, I would still ask but this one question, *τίνα τότε καρπὸν*, "what fruit had he then of this sin,"—then, when it was full in his mouth, a swelling his cheeks,—"whereof he is now ashamed," cannot choose but blush, his ears glow, or be in some pain till I have done speaking of it: and yet beyond this, the end of those things is death, a several fiend in hell most sadly to come, the payment of every of those gainless oaths. It were but a *ψυχρὸν*, or cold address to this kind of sinner, to bespeak him in that expostulating style; "what advantageth it to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" it were more to his purpose to demand, what advantageth it him to gain not one atom, or most diminutive part of the world, not the least acquisition of any thing desirable even to the carnal man, satisfactory to any part of his appetite, save that (in a manner, Platonic) designless love of sinning, and ruining his own soul, and yet to do that as sure, as if he had Satan's *totum hoc*, his whole exchequer of wealth and honour in exchange for it? I shall rather add, what shall that man give in exchange for his soul to get it back again, which he hath parted with so cheap without any barter, sold it for nought and taken no money for it, in the Psalmist's phrase, and now cannot redeem it with all his patrimony? It would grieve one, I confess, that did but weigh this sin in this balance, and observe the tekel in the wall over against it,

[Matt. v. 34.]

[Rom. vi. 21.]

[Matt. xvi. 26; Luke ix. 25.]

[Is. lii. 3; Ps. xliv. 12.]

[Dan. v. 5, 27.]

how light and kexy and impertinent a sin this is, to hear that any body should be damned for it in another world, part with such treasures for such trifles, make such African voyages, carry out the substantial commodities of a good land, and return with a freight of toys or monsters, pay so hugely dear for such perfect nothings; and yet it would grieve one more, that this sin should glitter in a protestant court, become part of the gallantry and civility of the place, aye and defame and curse our armies, that the improsperousness, ruin, perhaps *πανολεθρία*, of a whole kingdom should be imputable to one such sin, and all our prayers to heaven for you be outsounded and drowned with that most contrary eloquence. It were the justest thing in the world, that he, that upon my present instance,—this more than *δευτέρα νουθεσία*, second admonition,—will not now vow to part for ever with this one sin, so threatful to his sovereign, his country, his own soul, to the hosts gone forth against the enemy, to all that is or should be precious to him, and so absolutely gainless to himself in his vilest capacity, even as a sensual brute, should never be admitted within these doors again, never be preached to more, never be considered a Christian so much as in profession, that will part with his true Christ or Jesus, rather than with the names of them to blaspheme by; that he should be delivered up to Satan, as the primitive offenders were, *βασανίζεσθαι*, to be corporally tormented by him, *εἰς ὄλεθρον σαρκὸς*, to the tearing that foul tongue, that noisome piece of flesh out of his mouth, that by that means at least, *παιδευθῇ μὴ βλασφημεῖν*, he may be disciplined or taught not to blaspheme.

[Tit. iii. 10.]

[1 Cor. v. 5.]

[1 Tim. i. 20.]

Will you look into another sin,—a time of humiliation may be an excuse for the digression,—that of uncleanness, whether of the eye, the libidinous look, that men are so hardly persuaded to believe to be a sin,—i. e. in effect, that Christ forbad any thing under that phrase of looking on a woman to lust,—or whether that of the tongue, that *oris stuprum*, unsavoury discourse, rotten, putrid, noisome conversation, which makes it so absurd for that man ever to pray, —to bless God in the church, with that part that was so polluted in the chamber,—or whether the grosser sin, the making the members of Christ members of a harlot,—meant by the

[Matt. v. 28.]

[1 Cor. vi. 15.]

SERM. VII.

Apostle as a huge expression, members of a swine, a toad, had been nothing to it,—what is this, but a Barabbas still, a robber in competition with Christ for that body, which is, saith the Apostle, "for the Lord, and not for fornication." A vile infamous crime, that stays not, for the most part, for its hell, its punishment in another world, meets with its *limbo*, its Tophet here, torments and curses enough in this life, if they might have leave to be considered.

1Cor.vi.13.

[Acts xv. 20; xvii. 16; xx. 25; 1Cor. v. 10, 11; vi. 9; x. 7, 14; Gal. v. 20; Eph. v. 5; Col. iii. 5; 1 Pet. iv. 3; Rev. ii. 14, 20; xxi. 8; xxii. 15.]

It is worth observing in the New Testament that the name of idolatry, not often mentioned there, doth most times very probably denote this sin of uncleanness or carnality; the observation might be made good at large, if it were now seasonable; and I would to God my auditory would be persuaded thus to keep themselves from idols, to fly from this kind of idolatry, that men's natures have a thousand times more temptations to, than that other sin that bears the envy of all our misery, the idolatry that the sacrilegious so declaim at: believe me, there is not a sin more incompatible with the gospel mercy, a more irreconcilable rival of all godliness, a greater waster of conscience, griever and quencher of the spirit, a more perfect piece of atheism and heathenism, be it in the fairest outside Christian; nor withal a greater blasting and curse to a nation, an army, a garrison town, than the permission of this one sin, the voice of it crying to heaven, as loud as Sodom, for fire from heaven, for judgment upon the place. Remember the fierce judgment in Shittim, upon the people's joining to Baal Peor, that filthy heathenish idol, expounded by committing whoredom with the daughters of Moab; the heads of the people, remember that, the heads of the people, the principal men in Israel, either because they were most guilty, or because the matter required such an expiation, must be hanged up against the sun, that the anger of the Lord might be turned away from Israel,—and I believe it would pose a man to give any reason why this sin (of adultery at least) in this land, as well as stealing of a trifle, should not be awarded in the style of that text with hanging up against the sun,—and the command there is to them in the place of judicature to see the execution of the law against them, "Slay you every one his men." But this is a judaical out-dated punish-

Numb. xxv. 1.

ver. 5.

ment among us, and it hath been the cunning of Satan that it should be so, who having prospered so far for his clients, would not be quiet till he had gotten all kind of restraint or discouragement of this sin to be so too, till he had made the foulest incest a far cheaper sin and safer possession, than the practice of some Christian virtues; nay, which is observable to the lasting shame of this land, till the injured man thus despoiled and robbed by the adulterer, be made, by a kind of national custom, the only infamous person, and the Barabbas that robbed him punished only with that curse in the Gospel, of having all men speak well of him. O what is this, but as the Psalmist saith, "to bless them whom God abhors," or as the prophet, "And now we call the proud, happy; and they that work wickedness, are set up!" Believe it, one or two such ponderous guilts as these, are able to keep the justest cause from buoying up itself, and our ferventest prayers from their πολὺ ἰσχύει, from working any saving miracles upon a land.

[Luke vi. 26.] [Ps. x. 3.] Mal. iii. 15.

I wish there were now no more Barabbas's amongst us, a canvassing against Christ, but I must not flatter you with so short a catalogue; look on your indevotion, that heartless, zealless behaviour in this very house of God. Your hearing, which is mostly the fairest part of you, what is it but as of a rhetor at a desk, to commend or dislike, the same which you have as well for the stage as the pulpit, a plaudit or an hiss; and for that other of prayer, though it be for those blessings of peace, of safety, the Shalom that many men have more devotion for, than that other great sense of that word, the salvation of their souls, and which ardent prayer is the only means to bring down upon us; yet what cold addresses, what wandering eyes and thoughts, what irreverent negligent motions, what yawning instead of sighing out our parts of it, what absolute indifference, if God will take our own witness, whether we be heard or no? This want of ardency in us, this no fire on our altar of incense, is certainly the thing that hath provoked God to deliver up our liturgy to Satan, to oppose and malign, to calumniate and defame as at this day; the Lord pardon us our part of this sin. This is the preferring of a Barabbas too, a robber, a devil perhaps, that steals away our hearts from Christ, even when we are in

SERM. VII.

[Luke xvii. 12.]

closest converse with Him. As for fasting, what is that but an empty, formal, unsignificant name? The scorn of the Pharisees twice a week, hath quite driven it out of our calendar. O consider this, and but once more consider; look on the Sermon in the Mount, the several graces and duties that there make up the Christian somewhat above the pitch of a scribe or Pharisee, and then every of the contrary vices, nay the very Jewish or heathen, the moral or natural man's virtues, that come short of that high philosophy, are every one the Barabbas in the text, directly this Jewish choice; he that cannot forgive an enemy, bless him, pray for him, heap all the hot burning coals of charity upon his head, and melt him by that artifice, rather than break him, ruin him, damn him by any other, what doth he but prefer his own revengeful lust, that hellish piece of sensuality, that food for the wolf, the vulture, the salamander, the devil in him, directly before the commands, not only counsels of Christ? and so *non hunc, sed Barabbam,* a Barabbas is still the choice, and the Christ the reprobate still; which brings me to the third particular, the choice itself, not only preferring one before the other, but 1. absolutely rejecting of one: and then 2. *ad evitandum vacuum,* to fill up the vacuity, pitching upon the other, *non, sed,* "not this, but," &c.

And 1. absolutely not this, a downright reiterated *nolumus hunc,* most vehement dislikes to Christ as soon as ever He is mentioned: the Jews had particular quarrels to Him, ἐσκανδαλίζοντο, they were many times "scandalized at Him," but not they only, but it seems, we Gentiles too, the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit, whether the graces or the promises, οὐ δέχεται, "he receives them not," not only that he cannot attain to them, for that is said in the latter words, "neither can he know them," but οὐ δέχεται, "he receives them not," will not accept them when they are offered, for they are foolishness to him, not worth taking up in the streets, he cannot stoop to such trifles; and in another place, the same Apostle saith it of Christ crucified, "To the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Gentiles foolishness;" the things of the Spirit are foolishness, and the Christ foolishness too, we not only not choose Him, when any other comes in competition with Him, but not take Him, when none; an

[1 Cor. ii. 14.]

[1 Cor. i. 23.]

antipathy to Christ as Christ, an absolute aversation, rejection of such merchandise, though there were no price to be paid for them. This is a mystery of hell, let us view it awhile, and to that end consider Christ, in the two main parts of Him, in which He shines most illustrious towards us, His graces and His promises, the diet all the year long for His servants, and the wages at the end of His service; the *viaticum* He affords in the voyage, and the reward in the haven.

For the former of these, for grace, the bridegroom's feast, which so many were bid to, see there what difficulty there is to bring men to it, not one comes on the first invitation, though it seems all were really expected, and the entertainment provided; when all is ready, the servants are again sent out to tell them they are stayed for, and the issue is, "they all with one consent began to make excuses;" the feast was ready, grace ready to be spoiled for want of guests, and yet neither civility, nor pity, nor common gratitude can work upon them, or extort the acceptance of such a donative; the field, the oxen, the wife, are like the Barabbas here, not the reasons but excuses of their contempt, pretences only and opportunities of getting off more cleanly, more handsomely from Christ; and if you mark it, so it is. There is nothing that we have learned so perfect from Adam as that art of excuses; and withal, nothing that we so vehemently desire to be excused from, as the power of grace, when it makes toward our souls, when by the preaching of the word powerfully applied, with an "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead," and "O consider this, ye that forget God, lest He tear you in pieces," and "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish:" when by the message of that angel come up close to us, the Holy Ghost begins to overshadow and beget Christ in us, that procreative light of heaven darting its beams, and those attended with some conceptions of holiness in a carnal breast, O how uneasy we are, how encumbered, till we can get rid of this burden, like so many harlots that live by the trade of not conceiving, or when that will not be done, force an abortion if it be possible; we must be excused from that austerity, we are impatient of being so attenuated, and spiritualized, wrecked, though it be but from our lees; the last flash of

Luke xiv.

[Eph. v. 14.]

[Ps. l. 22.]

[Acts xiii. 41.]

SERM. VII.

the candle, pangs of the expiring soul, are time enough for this bearing fruit unto God. Lord, make us chaste, make us sober, make us humble then, "let me die the death of the righteous, and my last end be like his," let me have a shower of sanctity, a clinic's baptism, some good wholesome wishes or ejaculations to bathe me before my last journey, an Elias' fiery chariot of zeal then to hurry me to heaven, *sed noli modo*, Lord, none of this purity yet, the *κινδυνεύει εἶναι ὅλη-ψυχὴ*, in Eunapius, the danger of being all soul, all holiness, all heavenly-mindedness so early, is a sad frightful thing for a young courtier, a young soldier, a young academic, for any that are under the age, or not come to the infirmities of the *clinici* in the primitive Church,—those that would not be baptized till they were ready to die, and so were literally *βαπτιζόμενοι ὑπὲρ νεκρῶν*, baptized for dead, then and not till then desired to be baptized. Holiness is a dull melancholy thing, fit only for a hypochondriac to be entertained with. Thus when the crest-fallen Israelites were to be redeemed from an Egypt to a Canaan, they cry out upon Moses and Aaron, chide with their saviours, abominate their deliverers; thus the harassed degenerous emasculate slave is offended with a jubilee, a manumission, servitude is his sensuality, he will not go out free, brings his ear to his master and desires to be bored through it, that he may be a slave for ever. Once more, thus the man possessed with no less than a legion of devils, casting him sometime into the fire, sometime into the water, tearing him till he foameth again, is passionately fallen in love with that legion, hath not the patience to be rid of these devils; when Christ comes to cast them out, he is most out of charity with that Christ, *τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοὶ*, "what have I to do with Thee?" not thou devil, that hast tormented me all this while, but "Thou Jesus the eternal Son," or Thou piety the precious grace "of God, art Thou come to torment," i.e. to sanctify or dispossess, "me before my time?" torment me by delivering me from the tormentor, disease by curing, poison me by Thy balm or balsam, wound me by Thy mollifying plasters, condemn me to hell by bringing me into a sight of heaven? thus when the beloved comes and knocks at the door of the espoused soul, "Open to me my sister, my love," and there waits without doors

[Numb. xxiii. 10.]

[1 Cor. xv. 29.]

Exod. v. 21.

Exod. xxi. [2—6.]

[Mark ix. 20, 22; Luke ix. 39.]

[Mark v. 7; Luke viii. 28.]

[Cant. v. 2, 3.]

most unseasonably and beyond all patience, "till his head be filled with the dew, and his locks with the drops of the night," all the answer that is to be had is no more but this, "I have put off my coat, how can I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?" I have put off righteousness like a garment, denudated myself of all that looks like holiness, and all the wooings of the true-beloved cannot give me patience to put it on again, I have washed my feet in mire or ink, doused my carnal affections in all the vileness of the world, and how shall I defile them with grace, pollute them with chastity, defame or profane them with any thoughts of holiness? thus doth the swine wash herself in the mire, and he that comes to cleanse, defiles her; the sinner never so well pleased as when he is given up to all vile affections, the offers of Christ, the importunities of grace, go for the only oppression, and usurpation, and tyranny in the world, and so *non hunc*, not this man, not Christ, as Christ signifies grace, that inchoation of sanctity that He came to bring among us. SERM. VII. [Cant. v. 2, 3.] [Rom. i. 26.]

And *non hunc* again, as that signifies the promises which Christ brought with Him, though those promises be of all that is valuable to immortal souls, of nothing but heaven and bliss, *non hunc*, none of Christ, when He comes but a herald of these. For even against this, we have two dislikes.

1. This bliss is of a new spiritual making,—and that is one reason why we despise the promises,—consists in the vision of God, contemplation of heavenly excellencies, nothing of the Turkish carnal paradise in it, nothing that this flesh and blood, the habitual sinner can tell what to make of. I remember Philoponus' conceit[d], that "to have a right apprehension of God, it was necessary to study the mathematics;" men naturally cannot understand any thing but by phantasms, and those still mixing in the contemplation of God, make men fancy God μεθ' ὕλης, with matter and corpulency; and the mathematics are a necessary means to help us to abstract from that. I would to God we had some such engine, or crane, or pully to elevate our fancies, to make it possible to think any thing pleasure which is not corpulent and carnal. A madness, believe it, that we wrong

[d] Præfat. in lib. de an. [Joan. Philoponus in Arist. lib. de Anima Procem., p. 2. Venet. 1535, quoting Plotinus.]

SERM. VII.

the Epicureans to think any of that ancient sect was ever guilty of it; no, they could please themselves with spiritual beauty, as far as they apprehended there was any; witness Epicurus himself, who though he were under those pains of strangury and dysentery that were not capable of increase, of which, it seems by Laertius[e], he died, yet, saith he, in his will, *ἀντιπαρετάττετο πᾶσι τούτοις τὸ κατὰ ψυχὴν χαῖρον*, "the joy of his soul was able to hold out against all these:" only the Mahometan, and the carnal Christian, is the true Epicurean swine that Horace[f] prophesied of, that can find no pleasure but in the mire and dunghill, and that is one main reason of the *non hunc*, as he refers to promises; because they are celestial invisible felicities, that he cannot find any juice or taste in.

But besides that, there is another reason of it, another objection the carnal Jew-Christian hath to those promises, because indeed they are but promises, because of the futurity of them; he is a man of sense, and not of faith, *filius hujus sæculi*, all for present possessions, nothing for advowsons and reversions. "Ephraim is like the heifer," saith the Prophet, "that loveth to tread out the corn," the reason of that love was, because of that law, that the mouth of the ox or heifer must not be muzzled at that time; she is allowed to eat at the instant that she doth the work, is not put off to so long a date, so tedious an expectation of sweating here, and being fed and rewarded in another life, and that made Ephraim love to toil so well. A little present payment will go further with her, than the richest most glorious futurity. Poor short-sighted creatures! who cannot see a hand-breadth before us, like Socinus, huge enemies of prescience, will not allow it possible for God Himself to see any future, further than He hath decreed and determined it. For God to know, or us to believe any thing but what is before us, is a prodigy that carnal reason cannot consent to; and so you see the grounds of the *non hunc*, the no Christ absolutely at a venture, because there is nothing in Him to be esteemed, neither "form, nor comeliness, no" carnal or present "beauty, that we should desire Him," and therefore it follows, "He is despised, and rejected of men:" *non hunc*, "not this man."

[Hos. xii.]

[Deut. xxv. 4.]

Isa. liii. 2.

[e] Diog. Laert., lib. x. p. 721. [c. 10. tom. ii. p. 459. ed. Huebner. Lips. 1831.]

[f] [Horat. Epist., lib. i. iv. 16.]

SERM. VII.

But then this is not all; the disaffection to Christ is so great, that rather than have Him, the Barabbas shall be released: this, you are mistaken, if you think any large expression to Barabbas, they could value their own lives better than to desire impunity for murderers. The short is, they are so bent against Christ, that seeing there is a necessity of choosing one for release, of sacrificing some part of their malice and revenge to their present festivity, they will part with any the most reasonable part of it, rather than that was pitched on Christ. Barabbas was a notorious prisoner, one that had troubled the whole city, and every man's appetite was up to have Barabbas crucified; and yet, rather than Jesus shall live, Barabbas shall not be crucified; more insurrections, more blood, more seditions, more any thing, rather than be in danger to have Christ for their King. You may see it in St. Peter's meditation upon that part of the story, "But ye denied the Holy One, and the Just, and desired a murderer to be given unto you, and killed the Prince of life:" the Holy One, the Just, the Prince of life, holiness, justice, life itself, are things not to be endured, to be hunted, pursued, driven out of the world, and in comparison with them, the murderer turns saint, the most abhorred sins shall pass for most desirable rarities, Apollyon the only friend, and hell itself the vastest preferment. Acts iii. 14.

You see from hence that we may draw toward a conclusion; what hath helped Barabbas to his favour, what it is that hath brought most of the sins of the world into fashion among men: not any things esteemable or desirable in themselves, no not so much as to flesh and blood, till a habit and custom hath smoothed them to our throats, sweetened them to our palates, disguised their horror, and given us some tolerable pleasure in them. Believe it, there are few sins but ingenuous nature, when once the fury of youth is over, hath sufficient dislikes unto, that *σύμφυτος λόγος*, the light of natural conscience, that *ὅρκος ἐνουσιούμενος τοῖς λογικοῖς γένεσι*, in Hierocles[g], *ἐπαγγελία ἀνθρώπου*, in Arrian's style[h], that oath or promise, that sacrament in the mother's womb

[g] [*τοιοῦτος μὲν οὖν ὁ τοῖς λογικοῖς γένεσιν ἐνουσιούμενος ὅρκος, ἔχεσθαι τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῶν καὶ ποιητοῦ, καὶ μὴ παραβαίνειν μηδαμῇ τοὺς ὑπ' ἐκείνου διορισθέντας νόμους.*—Hierocl. in Pythag. v. 2.]

[h] [Epicteti Dissert. ab Arriano digest., lib. ii. c. 9. § 1.]

SERM. VII.

that every man takes to God, when he hath first leave to become a man, can help us to hate them perfectly. *Exemplo*[i] *quodcunque malum committitur, ipsi displicet*: that one auxiliary in our breasts is abundantly able to fortify against them, so far, that the man shall say really and in sobriety, he hath no pleasure in them; but then, in many others, there is a keen tooth, a stinging tail over and above the no pleasure, many *tormina* and twinges superadded; the drunkard that follows that trade of bestiality most close, finds it a very painful joyless calling; I will reveal this secret of his confession, though he fall into it oft, he hath no pleasure in it, no joy in those daily vomits, were they not physic against something else, against that burden of time that lies so insupportable upon his hands, against melancholy, against pangs and twinges of conscience, like Cain's building of cities, and his children's inventing of music, that the noise of the hammers and the melody of the instruments might outsound the din within him, or at least to take up quarter before Christ, to help stop the ear from that ἠρέμα σάλπιγξ, that still whispering trumpet in Appian, fit for the secret invasion of the soul, to keep him from the pain, or perhaps the reproach of being too precise: and most other sins are of the like making, we fly to them as to our refuge to save us from Christ, as the horns of our altar to keep us from that goal which we dread, as the revenger of blood, our only enemy and persecutor in the world. It is not any prime quality, any special excellence we find in our carnal entertainments,—those not only vanities but vexations, not only unsatisfying, but wounding acquisitions, those gainless torments, those painted flies with barbed hooks under them,—that makes us so passionately dote upon them,—the Jews were not in love with Barabbas,—but only our prejudices to Christ, our vehement dislikes to holiness, our impatience of any thing that may do us good, our league with perdition, our covenant with death, our zeal to hell, and absolute resolvedness to be miserable eternally.

[Eccles. xii. 1.]

Such malice hath every sinner to his own soul, such hating to be reformed, that the painfullest uneasiest sin, the most prodigal expenseful lust, a very Sodom of filth and

[i] [Juv. xiii. 1.]

burning, not only the sins of Sodom, but the fire and brimstone rained down and mixed with the sins, gotten into their composition, shall be abundant pleasure and epicurism to him that hath found no other to stay his appetite. I appeal to your own consciences, whether many of you have not suffered more hardship in Satan's service, than any man hath in God's? whether your very sins have not cost you dearer, than ever any martyr paid to get to heaven? Tell me, hath not your lust had martyrs of you, many passed through the fire to Moloch? hath not your ambition had martyrs of you, many a base submission, a toilsome pluck, a climbing or crawling up that hill of honour? Believe it, the poet jeered you in that not truth but irony, that sarcasm and bitter taunt against you, *facilis descensus Averni*[j], the descent to hell is an easy passage; if he spake what he thought, I am confident you can give him the lie, produce yourselves so many visible demonstrations of the contrary truth, that you can shew him by your scars as it were by the half moon in your breasts, what a tyrannical, Turkish task-master, Satan hath been to you. It is an ordinary passage in the story of Julian, that when he received his death's wound, he fell a railing at Christ; but Philostorgius seems to rectify the story, tells us[k], it was his own gods, i. e. devils, that he railed at, that he took his blood in his hand out of his wound, and cast it against the sun, his deified idol, with a *κορέσθητι*, "be thou satisfied;" yea, and called the rest of his many gods, saith he, *κακούς τε καὶ ὀλιτῆρας*,—so the manuscript hath it,—evil and execrable persons, *τοὺς αὐτοῦ θεοὺς κακολογῶν*, cursing and declaiming at his own gods, and not at Christ: the application is plain, the devil he is the bloody master, his is the coarse service, and sad wages, not Christ's; none is so fit to be cursed by his own clients as that prince of darkness, *ἄρχων αἰῶνος τούτου*, the monarch ruler of this age of ours. I have reason to believe there are no fitter judges to appeal to in this particular than my present auditory. It was a

j [Virgil. Æn. vi. v. 126.]

k [*ἀλλ' ὅ γε δείλαιος Ἰουλιανὸς τοῦ τραύματος ταῖς χερσὶν ὑποδεχόμενος τὸ αἷμα πρὸς τὸν ἥλιον ἀπέρραινε διαρρήδην πρὸς αὐτὸν λέγων κορέσθητι· καὶ δὴ καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους θεοὺς κακούς τε καὶ ὀλετῆρας ἐκάλει —— καὶ οὗτος μὲν εἰς τὸν ἥλιον ἀπορραίνειν τὸ αἷμα καὶ τοὺς αὐτοῦ θεοὺς κακολογεῖν, οἱ δὲ πλεῖστοι τῶν ἱστορούντων, εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν τὸν ἀληθινὸν Θεὸν ἑκάτερον γράφουσιν ἐναπορρίψαι.* — Philostorg. Hist. Eccles., lib. vii. cap. 15. Eccl. Hist., tom. iii. p. 520.]

SERM. VII.

French friar's conceit, that courtiers were of all men the likeliest to bear him company to his convent, not only fittest, but likeliest to forsake the world, and turn penitentiaries. He judged it, because such an one of all others had most reason to be displeased with the pleasures of the world, he hath seen to the bottom of sensual delights, found the emptiness and torments of those things, which the distance and ignorance that other men are kept at, makes them behold with reverence and appetite; the courtier hath made the experiment, and sees how strangely the world is mistaken in its admired delights, and with Solomon, after a glut of vexatious nothings, is now fit to turn Ecclesiastes, or Preacher. I wish you would be but at so much leisure, as to think of the friar's meditation, that you would try what mortifying sermons you could make out of your own observations, concerning the vanity of sensual miscalled pleasures. I am confident you would be very eloquent, able to out-preach all the orators you ever heard from the pulpit, to write more pathetical descriptions of the madness of a carnal life, than from any more innocent speculator could be hoped for. That you may begin that useful, edifying, lasting sermon, I shall close up mine, having at length run through the particulars of my text, shewed you yourselves in the Jewish glass, if it were possible to put you out of countenance, to shake you out of all tolerable good opinion of yourselves. And now let every man go home with a *tu es homo*, he is the very Jew I have preached of all this while.

[2 Sam. xii. 7.]

O that he would think fit to hate that Jew, humble him, labour his conversion, bring him down into the dust, if so be there may yet be hope. And that God that can bring from the dust of death again, open this door to us, a forlorn destitute people! so shall we see and praise the power and seasonable bounty of our deliverer, and ascribe unto Him, —as our only tribute,—the honour, the glory, the power, the praise, the might, the majesty, the dominion, which through all ages of the world have been given to Him that sitteth on the throne, to the Holy Spirit and to the Lamb for evermore. Amen.

SERMON VIII.

BEING A LENT SERMON AT OXFORD, A.D. 1645.

ST. PAUL'S SERMON TO FELIX.

Acts xxiv. 25.

And as he reasoned of righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled.

The words are the notes taken from a sermon of St. Paul's; and the success it met with among the auditors, the trembling of one heathen officer that was at it, is entirely the consideration that commended it to me at this time, in hope it might help to perform that strange work, beget a spiritual palsy or soul-quake in the Christian sinner, that worser kind of heathen, at the repetition.

There is matter enough, God knows, of trembling abroad, —though there were never a judgment to come,—to put us all into Belshazzar's paralytic posture,—the countenance changed, the thoughts troubled, the joints or the loins loosed, and the knees smiting against one another,—and we bear it with a strange constancy, continue still in as perfect an unconcerned tranquillity, as if it were but a scene, a romance, a news from Germany all this while; the Jonas that is gone down to sleep in the sides of the ship, and is the cause of all this tempest, must not be awaked after all these billows, our lethargic habits of sin not disturbed, only a few cowardly mariners may be allowed to pray "every man to his God," and that is the utmost that all these prodigies of vengeance can extort from us.

[Dan. v. 6.]

[Jon. i. 5.]

You will therefore give me leave to count it a prize, that I

SERM. VIII.

have here found a clap of thunder, that could awake somebody, a sermon that set one Felix a trembling; I should be too happy, if the repeating of it might have the same effect on any here present. "And as he reasoned of," &c.

In the words I shall but observe,

1. The matter of St. Paul's sermon, "righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come."

And 2. The form of it by way of reasoning. As for the trembling, that must be God's work on you, while I treat of these.

The matter I must consider, 1. absolutely; then as it is here clothed in a double relation, 1. to the text on which it was preached, and that you shall see in the verse precedent, to be the faith of Christ; 2. in relation to the prime auditor, Felix, whether as an officer of Cæsar's, or as a heathen, or as one peculiarly guilty of these sins to which the discourse is accommodated.

I begin first with the matter, considered absolutely, "righteousness," &c.

Three grand particulars, which though they are common places and vulgar themes, may yet have leave to give you divertisements awhile.

The δικαιοσύνη, whether justice, or righteousness in the front,—if you had the fathers' wish, to see and hear St. Paul in the pulpit, a pressing at large what you have here only in brachygraphy,—would look very sternly upon the most unrighteous oppressions of the many; that trade of subtlety and intricacy, that hath gotten the inclosure of all, not only the wealth and greatness of the world, but of the credit also, the reputation of wisdom, yea and of virtue too, the only honourable handsome quality, that all our respects and estimations are paid to; that new body of morality, that instead of the old out-dated despised rules of justice and uprightness, hath set up that one beloved law of self-preservation,—that other Antipheron in the Rhetorics that always seeth his own picture before him, and if health or security may be acquired, can say to himself, as Paracelsus to his scrupulous patient, if the cure be wrought, what matter is it whether it be by God, or the devil?—instead of the comfort of a pure immaculate conscience, the pleasure of satisfaction of having out-witted

and overreached our brethren; the joy and ravishment, the high taste and sensuality, as it were, of an indirect action, being to him far above the advantage and gain of it; and either of them able to outweigh the mystery of godliness, the (whether conscience, or) reward of blameless souls.

O! it is a fatal character of an accursed rebellious people, when in the prophet's style, "he that abstaineth from evil maketh himself a prey," when all those generous Christian virtues of meekness, and innocence, and charity, and not retaliating to enemies, shall become both undoing and scandalous qualities, a lawful prize for every harpy to seize on, and *ex abundanti,* over and above, matter of contumely and reproach to any that shall have so learned to be fools of Christ. [Is.lix.15.]

And it were a glorious and a royal design, worthy the gallantry of this congregation, and that which would bring Christianity into some credit in the heathen world, would give us more hope of proselytes from thence, than the apostle of the Indies,—Xaverius with his double gospel; one of Christ, the other of St. Peter,—ever brought back his masters; if sincerity, and uprightness, and dove-like innocence,—those good-natured rarities that our Saviour could not behold without loving the owner of them, although he were no Christian,—might be brought in fashion in a court, or kingdom; if oppression and the grosser acts of piracy might be driven out like wolves, and bears, and beasts of prey; and disguises, and crafts, and cheats, and all kind of artifices and stratagems, have as many names of vermin allotted to them, and all in one herd pursued, and hounded out of the world; if the examples of a Jacob, a David, a Nathaniel, a Christ, might be permitted to rescue the guileless heart and lips, at least, from reproach, and scorn, if not from the vulture's talons, if it might be esteemed but as infamous and vile to act, as it is to suffer injuries, as ungentlemanly a thing to thrive by fraud, as to perish by good conscience. And till this be set afoot among us,—this that an heathen Socrates would, if he were alive again, venture another martyrdom to replant among his Athenians,—may this first point of St. Paul's sermon be for ever ringing in your ears, περὶ δικαιοσύνης, "of righteousness," and a thundering [Mark x. 21.]

SERM. VIII.

"judgment to come," for all those that are not edified by that doctrine.

2. For temperance, or, as the word *ἐγκράτεια*, both here and elsewhere[a] more properly signifies "continence," and command of passions and lusts, the *τὸ ἐν κράτει ἔχειν*, "the mastery over a man's self." One cannot, in charity to Christendom, but stay upon it awhile, and recommend it to men's favour, so far at the least, that it may find the ordinary justice, to be preferred,—in their judgments, if not their passions,—before bestiality and villainy, before the *ἄτιμα πάθη*, the infamous affections which nature itself hath reproached and branded, that the preserving our bodies the temples of the Holy Ghost, may be but as creditable a thing as any of those *μεσήμβρινα δαιμόνια*, "noon-day devils," in Gregentius' phrase[b], those impudencies that have put off the veil, that are become so daring and confident, fornication, adultery, uncleanness, i. e. in the New Testament dialect, *ἀθέμιτοι εἰδωλολατρείαι*, outlared abominable idolatries; that chastity may be kept in some countenance, not pass either for such a strange or such a ridiculous, such an impossible or such a scandalous rarity.

[1 Cor. vi. 19.]

[1 Pet. iv. 3.]

Beloved, there was once a piece of discipline in the Church of God, of sending the devil into such swine, of delivering up the incontinent to Satan's smart, his real corporeal stripes, and inflictions in the Apostles' age; and after this smart was commuted for shame, casting them out of the Church, out of the society of all civil men, *ἵνα ἐντραπῶσι*, "that they might be ashamed."

[2 Thess. iii. 14.]

It seems it was then a more fashionable creditable thing to be a praying in the Church, than a dallying in the chamber. Continence was recommended to Christians, not only among the *σεμνὰ* and *ἁγνὰ*, "the venerable and the pure," but the *προσφιλῆ* and *εὔφημα*, "lovely and commendable." Embraced by men of quality upon the same motives, on which now all the contrary vices are taken up, in adoration to that great idol, civility and reputation; virtue was then the

Phil. iv. [8.]

[a] 1 Cor. ix. 25, et Ignat. ad Philip., *εἴτις ἁγνεύει ἢ ἐγκρατεύεται*, speaking of men and women.] S. Ignat. ascript. Epist. ad Philipp., c. 13. ap. Patr. Apost. ii. 119.]

[b] [Gregentii Episc. Tephrensis Disput. cum Herban. Jud. ap. Gallandii Biblioth. Patr., tom. x. p. 624. See Ps. xc, (xci.) 6. LXX.]

SERM. VIII.

more splendid title, the more courtly name; and it is none of the meanest sins and plagues, provocations and vengeances of this kingdom, that the measure of honour and gallantry among us is taken from fools and madmen, and by that means shame so prodigiously transplanted; the chaste man is the only leper to be separated and thrust out from the camp, modesty the only scandalous thing; the three degrees of the new-fashioned excommunication are denounced and executed, like the Athenian ostracism, upon the several gradations of that virtue; the purity of the body, the tongue, the eye, have a kind of Nidui, Cherem and Scamatha[c] proportioned to them, no man is civil enough for ordinary converse, till he hath renounced such pusillanimous innocencies, and brought forth fruits worthy of that repentance, a whole knight-errantry in that sin, confession with the mouth, glorying of their masculine enterprises,— enough to fill a romance,—and even martyrdom itself, and many sad encounters, and real hellish sufferings in that service, and all this penance, of the least to expiate the crime of bashfulness, to reconcile the modest puny, to make him fit for society with men. [Rom. x. 10.]

I remember a conceit of Herodotus[d], when the Greeks besieged Troy, he believes Helena was in Egypt, because otherwise had she been in the city, they would certainly have delivered her up, and saved themselves: so strange did it seem to him and irrational, that men should choose rather to die, than part with a lust. And yet to the shame of us Christians, when God's judgments make such direful approaches to us on this great quarrel, for our vile and reproachful lusts, when a black grim cloud hangs just over our heads, gathered from the vapours, which this one dunghill hath exhaled,—as Rome, they say, and others as well as that, is enabled to oppress countries by the pensions it receives from them,—when the voice is come flashing out of that cloud, and the business driven to a close issue, repent or perish irreversibly,—the kingdom used by God at this time, as Antiochus of old by the Roman ambassadors,

[c] [The three kinds of excommunication according to the Rabbins. See Buxtorf, Lexicon Rabbinicum ad verb. נדוי, חרם, and שמתא.]

[d] [Herod. Euterp. 120.]

SERM. VIII.

put into a circle, as it were, and not suffered to come out till we shall give our answer,—we desert and renounce estates and lives, honours, and souls and all, rather than retrench or abate aught of this accursed superfluity.

And to this unsavoury humour and custom of the world, one use may be brought home from St. Paul's sermon, though taken in cypher, *περὶ ἐγκρατείας*, "of continence," I beseech you save me the pains, resume and enlarge it to yourselves.

3. For judgment to come, 1. that there is such a thing, 2. that it descends to such mean particulars as justice, and continence, I cannot but in passing be your remembrancer.

1. That there is such a thing.

Injustice and incontinence are two main supplanters of all belief of the judgment to come; when a man hath once set up that infamous trade of the *βουλόμενοι πλουτεῖν*, of "resolving to be rich," in spite of all those objections, and stops, and incumbrances of honesty and direct dealing, when he is come to a contemning that pedantry of justice, of observation of oaths, that shall interpose so uncivilly to resist his thrift and advancement in the world, believe it, the *minæ vatum*, the news of the judgment to come, in the preacher's mouth, will be under a heavy suspicion of fraud and cheat, and in fine pass, but for fictions and mormos, too weak to outlook a brave glittering temptation. The taxes on the ecclesiastics in Florence, which nobody else dare collect for fear of the pope's thunderbolts, the Jews will exact undauntedly. Now the covetous worldling is that Jew, whose soul being gone down into the bowels of the earth, *πρὸς τὴν τοῦ χρυσοῦ μεταλλείαν*, in Diodorus' phrase[e], to an eternal drudgery in the gold mineral, is out of the reach of sounds from heaven, out of the awe, or noise, of thunderbolts. The mammonist is in your danger, at your mercy to turn atheist, whensoever you bid him, whensoever the lure of gold shall be at leisure to tempt him, ready to renounce all hope, all fear of another world, whensoever your goods are so put within his reach, that an easy perjury will bring them into his inventory.

1 Tim. vi. [9.]

And for the lusts of the flesh, it was Aristotle's[f] observa-

[e] [Diodor. Sicul. Bibl. Hist., lib. iii. c. 12.] [f] [Aristot. Eth. Nic., lib. vi. c. 5.]

tion, that they are *φθαρτικαὶ τῶν ἀρχῶν*, they debauch and corrupt our principles, they send up more heathen fumes into the brain, than any other distemper can do. St. Cyril[g] tells us of some idolaters, that would have only a day God, because the night was a time for revelling, and to have a God then would destroy their game, and therefore they pitched upon the sun; *ἵνα κατὰ τὸν νυκτὸς καιρὸν ἄθεοι μένωσι*, that they might be atheists all night, and then they take it out to purpose, *ἀμυνόμενοι τὴν ἡμέραν*,—as St. Basil[h] saith of the glutton's fasts,—revenging themselves on their day-devotions by their night-revels, never acknowledge a God, when a lust is to be lost by it: and Athenagoras[i] hath given it for a rule, that the denying of the resurrection, the resolved concluding the world with this life, and believing nothing of another, is the *κοινὸν δόγμα, καὶ νόμος εἷς ἀκολάστοις καὶ λάγνοις φίλος*, the only-beloved doctrine of the voluptuous. He that hath once transformed himself into that swine, hath his optic nerves so changed in his forehead, that,—as Plut. observes of that creature,—he never sees heaven again, till he be laid on his back. And I fear the race of such heathen swine, is likely within a while to prove the prime staple commodity of the land.

We are fallen into peevish times, wherein all God's methods are quite perverted; the powerfulest means that were ever afforded for the casting such devils out of a kingdom, are debauched into matter of improvement and heightening of the humour, and even dethroning God, if He will not comply with it; the very angels that came to Sodom to visit for villainy, are once more assaulted and violated by our lusts; I mean, those judgments from heaven upon a vicious generation, that would have inspired a colony of Scythians with some piety, by a strange kind of *antiperistasis*, or contrary working, have made men more profane, and godless, than ever they were before; the storm so close over our heads, that in other kingdoms they say sets them a ringing bells, shooting guns, lifting up voices to break and dissolve the cloud that threatens them, hath set us upon the same design

[Gen. xix. 5.]

[g] [S. Cyril. Hieros. Catech. iv. 6. p. 54, B.]

[h] [S. Basil. de jejunio Homil. i. § 10. Op., tom. ii. p. 9, D.]

[i] [Athenag. de Mort. Resurr. 19. apud Galland., tom. ii. p. 53.]

SERM. VIII.

by oaths and blasphemies, and those accursed *κελεύσματα*, the shouts of our soldiers, have broke the cloud indeed, brought down (not the dove flying over our heads, as historians tells us a shout in an army once did, and an army of united prayers may do so again, but) the eagle to a carcase, the night raven to the funeral of a consumptive Church and monarchy; an hell from heaven upon an abominable people.

Ἀναίσθητος ὅστις πολλὰ παθὼν οὐ σωφρονίζεται, could the tyrant Phalaris say, "He that is not made sober by many sufferings, is absolutely insensate." And yet God knows, out of this rock the greatest part of this age seems to be hewed: the thunder about our ears that could teach the most barbarous nations to believe and tremble, the breaking in of the lions that disciplined the Assyrians in Samaria to seek out instruction in the "manner of the God of the land," God's using us as the physician in the epigram did the lethargic patient, putting a lunatic into the same room with him, to dry-beat us, if possible, into sense and life again; His proceeding to that great cure of the *λύειν ἕξιν*, dissolving the habit of the body politic, and to that end, letting blood to a *deliquium*, which Hippocrates[k] resolves so necessary to abate the *ἡ ἐπ' ἄκρον εὐεξία*, the high, full, athletic health, that is so dangerous in his Aphorisms; the driving out into the field with Nebuchadnezzar, which infused reason into that *λυκάνθρωπος*, which untransformed him again, and raised up his eyes to an acknowledgment of Him that "liveth for ever," have, God knows, wrought the quite contrary on us, wasted the seeds of natural piety within us, erected academies of atheism, endowed them with schools and professors, where the art of it may be learned at a reasonable rate; a young sinner of an ordinary capacity may within a few months' observation set up atheist for himself, profane, scoff at the clergy, be very keen and witty upon Scripture, have exceptions against the service of the Church, and all with as good grace as if he had served an apprenticeship in Italy; or at the feet of that great master, that martyr of atheism, Vanninus.

2 Kings xvii. [25, 26, 27.]

Dan. iv. [34.]

He that at the breaking in of this torrent of misery upon

[k] [Hippocrat. Aphorism. i. 3 et 23.]

SERM. VIII.

the land, had but walked in the counsel of the ungodly, was but upon probation and deliberation whether he should be wicked or no; that after some months, when the waters began to turn into blood, was yet advanced to a moderate proficiency, a standing in the way of sinners, and found it but an uneasy wearisome posture, a standing upon thorns or flints; is now fairly sat down in the chair of the scorner, or profane atheist, *in cathedra,* as a place of ease or repose, can blaspheme without any regrets of a petulant conscience; *in cathedra,* as a seat of state, profanes with a better grace than he can do any thing else, is become a considerable person upon that one account, is valued among lookers on by that only excellency; and *in cathedra* again, as a professor's chair, a doctor of that black faculty, ready to entertain clients, to gather disciples, to set up an independent church of rational blasphemers, and,—being himself a complete convert, sufficiently approved to Satan,—to confirm and strengthen those puny brethren, that are not arrived to the accursed measure of that fulness, fit them with Machiavel's capacity for vast undertakings, by that excellent quality of being wicked enough, the want of which, saith he, hath been the undoing of the world. "And shall not God visit for this, shall He not be avenged on such a nation as this? A wonderful and horrible thing is wrought in the land," the judgments that were sent to awake, have numbed and petrified us, the fire in the bowels of this earth of ours hath turned us into perfect quarry and mine, and, as Diodorus[1] tells us, in Arabia the ice and crystal is congealed *ὑπὸ θείου πυρὸς δυνάμεως, οὐκ ἀπὸ ψύχους,* "by the power of divine fire, and not by cold:" so are these icy crystal hearts of ours frozen by that fire from heaven, that shall one day set the whole universe a melting.

[Ps. i. 1.]

[Jer. v. 29, 30.]

But besides these atheists of the first magnitude, other inferior pretenders there are, that cannot shake off all apprehensions of all judgment to come, but yet upon distant tamer

[1] [Οὐ μόνον δ' ἐν ταύταις ταῖς χώραις ζῶα γεννᾶται ταῖς ἰδέαις ἐξηλλαγμένα διὰ τὴν ἀφ' ἡλίου συνεργίαν καὶ δύναμιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ λίθων παντοίων ἐκφύσεις διάφοροι ταῖς χρόαις καὶ ταῖς λαμπρότησι διαφανεῖς· τοὺς γὰρ κρυστάλλους λίθους ἔχειν τὴν σύστασιν ἐξ ὕδατος καθαροῦ παγέντος, οὐχ ὑπὸ ψύχους ἀλλ' ὑπὸ θείου πυρὸς δυνάμεων, δι' ἣν ἀσήπτους μὲν αὐτοὺς διαμένειν, βαφῆναι δὲ πολυμόρφως ἀναθυμιάσει πνεύματος.—Diodor. Sicul. Bibl. Hist., lib. ii. c. 52.]

SERM. VIII.

principles, can do Satan's business as well; for such trifles as this text takes notice of, the contraries to justice and continence, they have an *ἀπολύτρωσις*, like Marcus in Irenæus[m]; that charmed shield from the mother of the gods, which shall render them *ἀόρατοι τῷ κριτῇ*, invisible to the judge; the judicature erected by Christ, takes not cognizance of such moral breaches as these, there nothing but infidelity proves capital, or if the breaches of the first table may be brought in collaterally under that head, yet for these venial defailances against the second, this toy of circumventing our brethren, of defiling the flesh,—as its consequent in St. Jude, [ver. 8.] "speaking evil of dignities,"—Christ came to make expiation for such, not to receive bills of indictment against them, to be their priest, but not their judge. I remember a saying of Picus Mirandula, that a speculative atheist is the greatest monster but one, and that is the practical atheist. And yet this is the darling of the carnal fiduciaries, that can help him to reconcile his grossest sins, his anything with faith; how well, you will have leisure to see, if you please to descend with me from the absolute to the relative view of the matter of St. Paul's sermon, and consider first the relation which it hath to the text on which he preached it, and that you shall see in the former verse, *περὶ τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως*, con- [Acts xxiv. 24.] cerning the faith on Christ, and that is my next stage.

Ἡ εἰς Χριστὸν πίστις, "the faith on Christ," the phrase that some nice observers have laid such weight on, to denote the special act of justifying faith, as it is an affiance on Christ; of a far higher pitch than either the believing Christ, or believing in Christ; and yet it seems, those so despicable moral

m [Διὸ καὶ ἐλευθέρως πάντα πράσσειν μηδένα ἐν μηδενὶ φόβον ἔχοντας διὰ γὰρ τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν ἀκρατήτους καὶ ἀοράτους γίνεσθαι τῷ κριτῇ. Εἰ δὲ καὶ ἐπιλάβοιτο αὐτῶν, παραστάντες αὐτῷ μετὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τάδε εἴποιεν· Ὦ πάρεδρε θεοῦ, καὶ μυστικῆς πρὸ αἰῶνος Σιγῆς, ἣν τὰ μεγέθη διαπαντὸς βλέποντα τὸ πρόσωπον τοῦ πατρὸς, ὁδηγῷ σοι καὶ προσαγωγεῖ χρώμεθα ἀνασπῶσιν ἄνωτας αὐτῶν μορφὰς, ἃς ἡ μεγαλότολμος ἐκείνη, φαντασιαθεῖσα, διὰ τὸ ἀγαθὸν τοῦ προπάτορος προεβάλετο ἡμῖν τὰς εἰκόνας, τό τε ἐνθύμιον τῶν ἄνω ὡς ἐνύπνιον ἔχουσα· ἴδοὺ ὁ κριτὴς ἐγγὺς, καὶ ὁ κῆρύξ με κελεύει ἀπολογεῖσθαι· σὺ δὲ ὡς ἐπισταμένη τὰ ἀμφοτέρων, τὸν ὑπὲρ ἀμφοτέρων ἡμῶν λόγον, ὡς ἕνα ὄντα, τῷ κριτῇ παράστησον· ἡ δὲ μήτηρ ταχέως ἀκούσασα τούτων τὴν Ὁμηρικὴν* Ἄϊδος κυνέην αὐτοῖς περιέθηκε, πρὸς τὸ ἀοράτως ἐκφυγεῖν τὸν κριτήν· καὶ παραχρῆμα ἀνασπάσασα αὐτοὺς, εἰς τὸν νυμφῶνα εἰσήγαγε, καὶ ἀπέδωκε τοῖς ἑαυτῶν νυμφίοις.—S. Iren. adv. Hær., lib. i. c. 9.]

* [Hom. Il. E. v. 844.]

virtues,—those that so few think necessary, and some have affirmed destructive and pernicious to salvation,—are here brought in by St. Paul,—I hope not impertinently,—under this head, "justice, and continence, and judgment to come," parts of a sermon of the faith on Christ. SERM. VIII.

So 1 Cor., where St. Paul had fastened his determination, ch. ii. [2.], "to know nothing among them but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified;" in the very next chapter [iii. 3.] he charges them with sins of carnality, "strife, envyings, factions;" in the fifth [ver. 1.] with fornication or incest; in the sixth [ver. 1.] with "going to law before infidels:" all these, it seems, the prime contrarieties to the faith or knowledge of the crucified Saviour. Thus in St. James, you may mark that works of charity and mercy are called *θρησκεία*, "religion," and being authorized from such great Apostles, I shall not fear to tell you, that the prime part of the knowledge, and faith, and religion of Christ, the life and power of Christianity, is the setting up and reigning of these virtues in our hearts: you may see it, Tit. ii. 11, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared," *χάρις σωτήριος πᾶσιν*, the Catholic salvifick grace, be it Christ Himself, or the Gospel of Christ; and the end of this Epiphany follows, *παιδεύουσα*, to discipline, or to teach us, [ver. 12,] "that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously," the very virtues in this text, with the addition of one transcendent one, "and godly, in this present world:" a strange catalogue of fundamentals, one would think, for Christ to ascend the cross to preach unto us; we expect other manner of doctrines from Him, doctrines of liberty, jubilee and manumission,—as the merit and acquisition of His sufferings,—of security and protection from sin, that a little carnality shall not hurt us, of freeing us from this bondage to obediences, at least, from any judgment to come, for such errors as these, that flesh and blood makes so necessary and incorrigible: we have generally a smoother scheme of Christianity than Salvian[n] dreamed of, Jas. i. 27.

[n] [Sed videamus tamen quid sit Deum fideliter credi. Qui enim tam magnam credulitatis et fidei mercedem in hoc sæculo esse volumus, qualis credulitas aut fides ipsa esse debeat, considerare debemus. Quid est igitur credulitas aut fides? opinor hominem fideliter Christo credere, id est, fideliter Dei mandata servare.—Salvian. de Gubern. Dei, lib. iii. c. 2. apud Gal-

SERM. VIII.

in his *quid est fides, nisi præceptis Christi obedire?* "what is faith, but obedience to the commands of Christ?" The necessity of purifying, or mortifying of lusts, goes for an heresy of this nicer age, which must superadd works to faith, our own obedience to the righteousness of Christ, and so in Simon Magus his phrase, *homines in servitutem redigere,* make slaves of free-born men, have them live as well, as if Christ had never died for them.

The truth is, the doctrine we have now in hand, if believed and obeyed, is so certainly destructive of the devil's kingdom,—and none other so certain but this,—that you cannot blame Satan and his instruments to cry it down as the vilest heresy in the world.

He may hope for some tolerable quarter from any other principles, especially from those of the Solifidian and fiduciary, brave, delicate, inoffensive doctrines, that have nothing in them contrary to passions, and that gets them such zealous advocates, for by this divinity they have their lusts. And though it pleases God, by the power of His grace to preserve some men, that have imbibed these principles, from those ἀσφαλτώδη ῥεύματα, in Epiphanius' phrase, those streams of brimstone, that naturally flow from such mines as these, I mean from the pernicious and poisonous effects of them, though some that conceive obedience unnecessary to justification, live very strict and gracious lives in spite of all those advantages and encouragements to the contrary, yet now, God knows, the truth is too grossly discovered; the Gnostics' divinity begins to revive a great deal of carnal, I am sure of spiritual filthiness, yea all the profaneness and villainy in the world, is now the most natural spawn of those infusions; and to look no further than the glass, and those foul selves which that reflects unto us, "The cause of God, and the faith of Christ," of which we are seriously such champions, is, I fear, as much dishonoured and renounced by our faithless, apostate, atheistical actions, by our hellish

land., tom. x. p. 14.

Nam cum ut diximus, hoc sit hominis Christiani fides, fideliter Christum credere, et hoc sit Christum fideliter credere, Christi mandata servare, fit absque dubio ut nec fidem habeat qui infidelis est, nec Christum credat, qui Christi mandata conculcat, ac per hoc totum in id revolvitur, ut qui Christiani nominis opus non agit, Christianus non esse videatur.—Salvian. de Gubern. Dei, lib. iv. c. 1. apud Galland., tom. x. p. 18.]

SERM. VIII.

oaths and imprecations,—that poltroon sin, that second part of Egyptian plague of frogs, and lice, and locusts, the basest that ever had the honour to blast a royal army, that casts us into such epileptic fits, such impure foamings at the mouth, and will not be bound, no not with chains,—in a word, by our going on in such sins, against which the denunciation is most punctual, that "they which do these things shall never enter into the kingdom of heaven," and yet flattering ourselves, that we shall not fail to enter, as by all the species of infidelity, all the Judaism and Mahometism, and barbarism in the world. And therefore as it is the mercy of the Apostle thus to disabuse his besotted Corinthians, "know ye not," and "be not deceived, neither fornicators," nor any of that bestial crew, "shall inherit the kingdom of heaven," *in thesi*, so is it the justice of his charity to make it a prime ingredient in an apostolic sermon; scarce any other article so necessary to be preached, especially to a Felix, whether as a commander, or as a heathen, or as one peculiarly guilty of those sins: and that is the second part of the relative aspect of these words, as they refer to the auditory, my next particular.

[Gal. v. 21.]

[1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.]

And 1. as Felix was an *eques Romanus*, procurator of Judæa, whose power gave him opportunities to be unjust, and his splendid life temptations to incontinence, no part of Christian religion, no article of the Creed is so proper for his turn, as the doctrine of "the judgment to come," for such sins as these; that palliate vulgar cure of healing and not searching of wounds, of preaching assurance of present pardon, before reformation is wrought, of solacing but not amending of sinners, is not the method in St. Paul's, in Christ's dispensatory; it is the scandal rather and reproach of Christianity in Julian[o], *ὅστις φθορεὺς, ὅστις μιαιφόνος εἰσίτω θαρρῶν*, security, and protection, and place of confidence from Christ to the most polluted villain, the defamation of Constantine in Zosimus[p], that he turned Christian, because

[o] [Juliani Cæsares ad fin. Op. p. 336, A. Lips. 1696.]

[p] [*ταῦτα συνεπιστάμενος ἑαυτῷ, καὶ προσέτι γε ὅρκων καταφρονήσεις, προσήει τοῖς ἱερεῦσι καθάρσια τῶν ἡμαρτημένων αἰτῶν· εἰπόντων δὲ, ὡς οὐ παραδέδοται καθαρμοῦ τρόπος δυσσεβήματα τηλικαῦτα καθῆραι δυνάμενος, Αἰγύπτιός τις ἐξ Ἰβηρίας εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην ἐλθὼν, καὶ ταῖς εἰς τὰ βασίλεια γυναιξὶ συνήθης γενόμενος, ἐντυχὼν τῷ Κωνσταντίνῳ πάσης ἁμαρτάδος ἀναιρετικὴν εἶναι τὴν*

SERM. VIII.

he was guilty of such sins, for which no other religion allowed expiation; no, the only safe medicinal course is, to apply corrosives and caustics, the "terrors of the Lord," and "the consuming fire of the Lord, the judgment to come," when any mortified flesh is to be gotten out; and to accept the face of a Felix in this kind, to withhold those saving medicines in civility to the person to whom they are to be administered, and so suffer that sin upon my splendid neighbour, that my charity requires me to rebuke in any meaner person, this is the unjustest rudeness in the world, the most treacherous senseless compliance, the most barbarous civility, cruel mercy, the telling him in effect that he is too great to be cured; this, saith Procopius[q], is the saluting by the way, which Elisha forbids Gehazi, and Christ the disciples, the one when he went to cure, the other to preach: and it is his observation there, that such civilities *θαυματουργίαν κωλύουσι*, keep preachers from working any miracles, the gentle handling of the great man's sins, is many times the damning of him, and debauching all the neighbourhood; the Lord be merciful to our whole tribe, for our uncharitable omissions in this matter.

[2 Cor. v. 11; Heb. xii. 29.]

[2 Kings iv. 29; Luke x. 4.]

And for once I may chance to deserve your pardon, if I do not conceive the flatteringest addresses to you, to be always the friendliest: if in mere charity to some auditors I imitate my Saviour, and tell you of woes even under a Saviour, of "casting into utter darkness, where the worm never dieth, and the fire is not quenched," with all the variations and exchange of accents, three times repeated by our Saviour, within four verses; of an *horrendum est*, what a fearful thing it is to fall into God's hands, and be ground to powder by that fall; if I bring out all those topics of so true, and withal such amazing rhetoric, with "who can dwell with everlasting burnings?" and all little enough to rouse you out of that dead prodigious sleep of sin, to retrench the fury of one riotous lust.

[Mark ix. 43—48.]

[Heb. x. 31.]

[Mat. xxi. 44; Luke xx. 18.]

[Is. xxxiii. 14.]

τῶν Χριστιανῶν διεβαιώσατο δόξαν· καὶ τοῦτο ἔχειν ἐπάγγελμα, τὸ τοὺς ἀσεβεῖς μεταλαμβάνοντας αὐτῆς, πάσης ἁμαρτίας ἔξω παραχρῆμα καθίστασθαι. δεξαμένου δὲ ῥᾷστα Κωνσταντίνου τὸν λόγον, καὶ ἀφεμένου μὲν τῶν πατρίων, μεταστχόντος δὲ ὧν ὁ Αἰγύπτιος αὐτῷ μετεδίδου, τῆς ἀσεβείας τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐποίησατο, τὴν μαντικὴν ἔχειν ἐν ὑποψίᾳ.—Zosim. Hist., lib. ii. c. 29.]

q [*ἥδει αὐτοῦ τὸ φιλότιμον. ἡ δὲ κενοδοξία τὴν θαυματουργίαν κωλύει*—Procop. Schol. in Reg., lib. iv. 4. 29.]

I beseech you tell me, is there ever a judgment to come, ever an account to be given for moral virtues? Do you so much as fear, that for every unclean embrace, or dalliance, every shameless loud riot, for every boisterous rage or execration, that I may not add, for every contumelious rude address to the throne of grace, every base contempt of that majesty that fills this place, God shall one day call you into judgment? if you do, and yet go on in these, believe me, you are the valiantest, daringest persons in the world: and if death be not more formidable to you than hell, you are fit for a reserve, or forlorn hope, for the cannon's mouth, for cuirassiers, for fiends to duel with: and let me for once set up an infamous trade, read you a lecture of cowardice, and assure you that a judgment to come may be allowed to set you a trembling; that it may be reconcilable with gallantry to "fear Him that can cast both body and soul into hell," and put you in mind of that which perhaps you have not considered, that you are not atheists enough to stand out those terrors when they begin to come close up to you, in a death-bed clap of thunder: Cain that was the first of this order, was not able to bear that near approach, "he went out from the presence of the Lord;" and the Rabbins[r] have a fancy of Absalom, that when he was hanged by his hair in the midst of his rebellion, he durst not cut it, because he saw hell below him, but chose to die, rather than adventure to fall into that place of horror, that his attached conscience had prepared for him; they are, believe it, such unreformed atheistical lights as these, that have made it so indifferent a choice, whether the kingdom be destroyed, or no; whether it be peopled with satyrs, or with wilder men, become all desert, or all bedlam.

[Mat. x. 28; Luke xii. 5.]

[Gen. iv. 16.]

This heaviest judgment that ever fell upon a nation, extreme misery, and extreme fury is, I confess, a most direful sight, but withal a more inauspicious prognostic, a sound of a trumpet to that last more fatal day, with an Arise thou dementate sinner and come to judgment; when all our most bloody sufferings, and more bloody sins, got together into one Akeldama or Tophet, shall prove but an adumbration of that heavier future doom, after which we shall do that

[r] [Vid. Jarchi Comment. in 2 Sam. xviii. 9. apud Buxtorf. Bib. Heb.]

SERM. VIII.

to some purpose, which we do now but like beginners, by way of essay, "curse God and die," suffer and blaspheme, [Job ii. 9.] blaspheme and suffer for ever.

But then secondly, this doctrine of justice, and continence, and judgment to come, is most necessary, as to awake the courtly governor Felix, so in the next place to convert the unbelieving heathen Felix.

Will you see the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, when they are to be infused into such an one, or as the ori- Heb. vi. 1. ginal hath it, λόγον ἀρχῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ, "the doctrine of the beginning of Christ," the laws of the *μύησις*, or initiation of a heathen convert, the elements of his catechism they are Heb. vi. 2. in that place, 1. "Repentance from dead works;" and 2. "Faith towards God;" 3. "Resurrection;" and 4. "Eternal judgment:" and believe me, for him that thus comes unto God out of his animal, heathen unregenerate life, *τὰ ἀναγκαῖα σύντομα*, the catalogue of the *necessario credenda* Heb. xi. 6. is not over large; "he must believe that God is, and that He is a rewarder;" this, and it seems no more but this, is the *minimum quod sic*, the sum of the faith without which it is impossible to please Him: and therefore perhaps it was that Ammianus Marcellinus[s] expresses his wonder, that Constantius should call so many councils, whereas before, Christian religion was *res simplicissima*, a plain religion without contentions or intricacies, and Epiphanius[t] of the primitive times, that *ἀσέβεια* and *εὐσέβεια*, divided the Church into its true and erroneous members, impiety the only heretic, good life the orthodox professor.

Next the acknowledgment of the one God, and His eternal Son, the crucified Messias of the world, and the Holy Ghost, those one and three authors of our religion, into which we are baptized,—and those few other branches of that faith,—the judgment to come, and the practice of Christian virtues in the elevated Christian pitch, is the prime, if not only ne-

[s] [Christianam religionem absolutam et simplicem anili superstitione confundens; in qua scrutanda perplexius, quam componenda gravius, excitavit discidia plurima, quæ progressa fusius aluit concertatione verborum: ut catervis Antistitum jumentis publicis ultro citroque discurrentibus per synodos quas appellant, dum ritum omnem ad suum trahere conantur arbitrium, rei vehiculariæ succideret nervos.—Ammian. Marcell., lib. xxi. c. 16.]

[t] [S. Epiphan. adv. Hær., lib. i. c. 5.]

cessary. And though there be more to be known, fit to exercise his industry, or his curiosity, that hath treasured up these fundamentals in an honest heart, yet sure not to serve his carnal mind, to purge his spleen, to provoke his choler, to break communions, to dilapidate that peace, that charity, that Christ, beyond all other inheritances, bequeathed to His disciples. Let us but join in that unity of spirit in those things which we all know to be articles of faith, and the precise conscientious practice of what we cannot choose but know to be branches of our duty, and I shall never lead you into any confounding depths or mazes, divert you one minute by a walk in the gallery from that more Christian employment and task in the workhouse: and that will be the improvement of the second particular. SERM. VIII.

Lastly, as the Felix was guilty of those sins which those virtues did reproach to him.

This Felix is to be met with in our books presented to us on a double view of Tacitus and Josephus; Tacitus[u] renders him an *eques Romanus* that Claudius had sent procurator of Judæa, to manage it for a time, and saith, he did it *per omnem sævitiam et libidinem*, "in the most cruel arbitrary manner;" and then see the difference of an apostolic preacher, from Tertullus the rhetor, the one at his humble address and acknowledgment of the obligations that the whole nation had received from this "most excellent Felix," but St. Paul, in a pricking close discourse, "of justice, and (upon neglect of it) judgment to come." [Acts xxiv. 2, 3.]

Josephus[x] he looks nearer into his actions, and finds him a tyrannical usurper of another man's wife; Drusilla, seduced to his bed from her husband Azys the king of the Emesseni. And then the sermon of the faith on Christ presently lets loose at this adulterous couple, and so you have the seasonableness of the περὶ ἐγκρατείας too, of chastity to the unchaste Felix, and of judgment to come on such wasting sins.

This will certainly teach the preacher, the combatant of the Lord, the νομίμως ἀθλεῖν, the regular manner of his duelling with sin, not the ἀέρα δέρειν, wounding the empty air, lashing those sins or sinners, that are out of reach of his stripes, [2 Tim. ii. 5.] [1 Cor. ix. 26.]

[u] [Tac. Hist. v. c. 9.]

[x] [Joseph. Ant. Jud., lib. xx. c. 7.]

SERM. VIII.

but the closer, nearer encounter, the directing his blows at those crimes that are present to him, most culpable and visible in his auditory; and thus grasping with the Goliah of Gath, the tallest Philistine in the company.

There is a wide distance betwixt reproaching of present and absent sinners, the same that betwixt reproof and backbiting, the boldness and courage of a champion, and the detractions and whispers of a villain; the first is an indication of spirit; the second, of gall; the first, that a man dares attempt the loving and saving of his brother, when he shall endanger being cursed and hated for it; sacrifice your opinion to your health, your kindness to your souls; the second is a character of a solicitor fee'd on none but Satan's errand, an orator to set you a railing, but not a trembling, one that can write satires on condition they shall do you no good; incense, but not reform, that if it shall be possible for hell to lose by his sermon, will never preach more; the one meaneth to transform his auditory into converts and saints, the other into broilers and devils; the one hath all the charity, the other all the mean malice and treachery in his design.

And having such a copy before our eyes, suppose a man should divert a little to transcribe it, and instead of prudence, and tempering, and reviling of those that are out of our reach, reason a while of one branch of justice, yea, and of the faith of Christ, in which it is possible we may some of us be concerned; and enquire, whether there be not a piece of Turkish divinity stole out of their Alcoran into our creed; that of *prosperum et felix scelus virtus vocatur*, whether the great laws of virtue and vice be not by some *politici* taken out of the Ephemerides, nothing decreed honest but what we can prognosticate successful, the *victa Catoni*, the liking that cause which the heavens do not smile on, is a piece of philosophical sullenness, which we have not yet learned of Christ; what is this, but as St. Bernard[y] complains in his time, that those images had the most hearty adorations performed to them, which had most of the gold and gems about them; the god obliged to the image, and the image to the dress for all the votaries it met with; have the Roman-

[y] [Vid. S. Bernard. Apol. ad Gul. Abbat., c. xii.]

ists' marks of the Church so convinced us, that we must presently forsake our Saviour, because we see Him in danger of crucifying, tear our Gospels, and run out with horror as soon as we come to the twenty-sixth of Matthew, "the multitude with swords and staves for to take Him?" Was the cause of God worth the charge and pains of killing men formerly, and is it not worth the patience and constancy of suffering now? Is there any condition in the world so hugely desirable, as that of suffering for, or with Christ. Ἰδοὺ, μακαρίζομεν τοὺς ὑπομένοντας, "behold, we count them happy that suffer," was gospel in St. James his days,—the μακαρίζειν denotes the state of the οἱ μάκαρες, the dead saints in their country of vision, as you know St. Stephen at the minute of his sufferings "saw the glory of God, and Jesus sitting,"— the state of suffering is a state of bliss, I may add a superior degree of a glorified state, a more than ἰσαγγελία, a dignity above that orb that the angels move in; for they for want of bodies are deprived of the honour of suffering, all that they aspire to is but to be our seconds, our assistants in this combat; only Christ and we have the enclosure of that vast preferment. And if there be any need to heighten it yet further, is there any prize more worthy that masculine valour, than that venerable sacred name, "Jerusalem the mother of us all," that brought us forth unto Christ, begot us to all our hope of bliss, and now, for no other crime but that, is a struggling under the pangs and agonies of a bitter combat with the ungratefulest children under heaven? The Church of England, I mean, which whosoever hath learning and temper enough to understand, knows to be the brightest image of primitive purity, the most perfect conjuncture of the most ancient and most holy faith that for these twelve hundred years any man ever had the honour of defending, or suffering for. And should the provocations of an ungracious people, the not valuing or not walking worthy of the treasures here reserved, the rude continued iniquities of our holy things, tempt God to deliver it up, as He did once His ark to the Philistines, His Christ to the Pharisees and the soldiers, the zeal of the one, and the fury of the other; yet sure this would not be the confuting of what now I say, it would not, I must hope, be an argument of God's renouncing

[Mat. xxvi. 47.]

Jas. v. 11.

[Acts vii. 55.]

[Luke xx. 36.]

[Gal. iv. 26.]

SERM. VIII.

that ark, and that Christ, which He did not thus deliver. The Turks having conquered and torn out of the Christians' hands the places of the birth and passion of Christ, did after this way of logic infer that God had judged the cause for Mahomet against Christ; and Trajan could ask the primitive martyr Ignatius[z], *Et nos non tibi videmur θεοφόροι*, &c., Have not we as much of God in us as you, who prosper by the help of our deities against our enemies? Let me purloin or borrow this heathen piece out of your hands, and I shall be able to give you an ancienter piece in exchange for it, a thorough Christian resolution of abiding by God, of approving ourselves to Heaven, and to our own breasts, whatsoever it costs us, of venturing the ermine's fate,—the very hunter's hand, rather than foul her body,—the *pati, et mori posse*, the passive as well as the active courage, which will bear us up through all difficulties, bring us days of refreshment here, or else provide us anthems in the midst of flames, a paradise of comfort here, and of joys hereafter: and let this serve for the exemplifying the point in hand, the fitness of our Apostle's discourse to Felix's state.

[Is. lvi. 7; Jonah iii. 8.]

I might do it again by telling you of the dreadful majesty that dwells in this house, the designation of it to be a house of prayer to all people, a place of crying mightily to the Lord at such times as these; should I let loose a whole hour on this theme in this place, it would be but too perfect a parallel of St. Paul's discourse of chastity before Felix, which in any reason ought to set many of my auditors a trembling, but it seems we have not yet sufferings enough to do so: and there is one particular behind that will rescue you from this uneasy subject, the manner of St. Paul's handling this theme, by way of reasoning. "And when he reasoned," &c.

The importance of this reasoning I shall but name to you, which I conceive to be, 1. The proposing to a very heathen's consideration the equity and reasonableness that there should be a judgment to come to recompense the unjust and

[z] [Τραϊανὸς εἶπεν· καὶ τίς ἐστιν Θεοφόρος; Ἰγνάτιος ἀπεκρίνατο ὁ Χριστὸν ἔχων ἐν στέρνοις. Τραϊανὸς εἶπεν ἡμεῖς οὖν σοι δοκοῦμεν κατὰ νοῦν μὴ ἔχειν Θεούς, οἷς καὶ χρώμεθα συμμάχοις πρὸς τοὺς πολεμίους; Ἰγνάτιος εἶπεν· τὰ δαιμόνια τῶν ἐθνῶν Θεοὺς προσαγορεύεις πλανώμενος· εἷς γὰρ ἔστιν Θεὸς, ὁ ποιήσας τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς· καὶ εἷς Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ μονογενὴς, οὗ τῆς βασιλείας ὀναίμην.—S. Ignat. Martyr., c. ii.]

incontinent person. And 2. The charging home to each sinner's heart, the extreme unreasonableness, that for so poor advantages as either of those sins bring in to any man, he should think fit to venture that dismal payment in another world.

And now my brethren, to conclude this reasoning, and your task of patience together, when you are likely to have so little excuse in perishing, so no colour of reason for so wild an option, of choosing death in the error of your ways, when you must be so out of countenance when you come to that place of darkness, so unable to give an account to any fiend that meets you, why you should cast away all the treasures in the world for that so sad a purchase, and act that really which the Rabbins[a] feign of the child Moses, prefer the coal of fire before the ingot of gold, chop it into your mouths, and so singe your tongue, not to make you stammer with him, but howl with Dives for ever after, and not get one drop to quench the tip of that tongue, which is so sadly tormented in those flames; when, I say, you are likely to come so excuseless to your torments, so unpitied, and so scorned, so without all honour in your sufferings, as having but your petitions granted you, advanced to your vengeance as to your preferment, *optantibus ipsis,* whilst heaven was looked on as a troublesome impertinent suitor, and you would not be happy, only because you would not; O remember then the disciples' farewell, when they gave over the Jews and turned to the Gentiles, "Behold, you despisers, and wonder, and perish;" but before you do so, if it be possible give one vital spring, and if but for Pythagoras's[b] *αἰσχύνεο σαυτὸν,* for the reverence, if not the charity, for the honour and awe you owe to your own souls, if not to save them, yet to save your credits in the world, to manifest that you are not such abject fools, retract your choice, call back

[Acts xiii. 41.]

[a] [Quelques Rabbins enseignent que cette difficulté de parler étoit venue à Möise, de ce qu' à l'âge de trois ans, été présenté au Roi d' Egypte, et les Devins s' écriant que la vie de cet enfant seroit fatale au pays, on convint qu' on éprouveroit son esprit, en lui présentant une pierre précieuse, et un charbon; que s' il choisissoit la pierre précieuse, on le feroit mourir; que s' il prenoit le charbon, on le laisseroit vivre. On en fit sur le champ l'essai. Le jeune Möise vouloit porter la main à la pierre; mais un Ange la conduisit au charbon, et le lui fit mettre à sa bouche; ensorte que sa langue en fut brûlée, et qu' il demeura bégue toute sa vie.—Fable.—Calmet. in Exod. iv. 10.]

[b] [Pythag. Carm. Aur. v. 12.]

SERM. VIII.

the hostages you have given to Satan, and set out on a more rational, more justifiable voyage. You have heard of the rich Spaniard that had put all his estate into jewels, how he was ready to run mad with the fancy of thinking what a condition he should be in, if all men next morning should awake wise, that he should become not only the arrantest beggar, but the most ridiculous fool. And believe it, that last trump when it begins to sound, will have the faculty thus to make all men wise, to disabuse, and inspire the whole world with a new sense: those that are in the flames before you, will reproach your madness, count you but bedlams to come thither; poor Dives, if he had but a messenger, would long since have sent you a hideous report and admonition, that whatever it cost you, you should not venture coming to that place of torments; O let St. Paul's reasoning do it to us here, that we make not such piteous bargains, pay not so sad a price for so pure a nothing. Let us be wise now, that we may be happy eternally; which wisdom, the only way to that happiness, God of His infinite mercy grant us all: to whom, &c.

SERMON IX.

BEING AN EASTER SERMON AT ST. MARY'S IN OXFORD, A.D. 1644.

THE BLESSING INFLUENCE OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

Acts iii. 26.

God having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

It were but a cold, unequal oblation to so blessed, so glorious a festivity, to entertain you with the story of the day, to fetch out the napkin and the grave-clothes, to give you that now for news, that every seventh day for sixteen hundred years hath so constantly preached unto you. It is true indeed what Aristotle[a] observes in his *μηχανικὰ*, that the every-day wonders are the greatest, the perfectest miracles those that by their commonness have lost all their veneration; he speaks it of a circle which is of all things most common, and yet of all things most strange, made up of all contraries, and so the mother of all prodigies in art, of all the engines and machines in the world. And the same might be resolved of this yearly, this weekly revolution, the greatest, but commonest festival in the Christian's calendar, *βασίλισσα ἡμέρα*, "the queen-day," as St. Chrysostom calls it[b], aye, and that "queen all glorious within," a many saving miracles inclosed in it, and yet this queen of most familiar condescendings is content to be our every week's prospect, and after all this as glorious still as ever, no gluts, no satieties in such beholdings. [Ps. xlv. 13.]

[a] [Aristot. Mechan. Prolog. § 5, ad init.]

[b] [See S. Greg. Naz. Orat. xviii. c. 28, *ἡ βασίλισσα τῶν ἡμερῶν ἡμέρα*. Op., tom. i. p. 348, E. The expression does not appear to be used by St. Chrysostom.]

SERM. IX.

But supposing this, I must yet tell you one precious gem there is in this jewel, one part of the great business of this day, which is not so commonly taken notice of, and that is the blessing, saving office of the day to us, the benign aspect, the special influence of the rising of Christ on the poor sinner's soul, the use, the benefit of the resurrection; and to discover this unto you, let me with confidence assure you, there is not a vein in this whole mine, a beam in this whole treasure of light, a plume of those "healing wings" of the "Sun of righteousness," a text in this whole book of God, able to stand you in more stead, than this close of St. Peter's sermon: that our justification is more dependent on His resurrection, than His death itself, is sometimes clearly affirmed by St. Paul, "He was delivered up for our offences, and raised again for our justification." "It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again." And so for salvation itself, "And being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation," τελειωθεὶς, being consummate and crowned,—as τελείωσις ἀθλητοῦ is the crowning of martyrs,—or τελειωθεὶς, being consecrated to His great Melchisedech-priestly office,—as the context enforceth, and τελειοῦσθαι in the Septuagint imports,—in either sense a denotation of the resurrection of Christ peculiarly; and in this capacity considered, He became the αἴτιος σωτηρίας, "the Author of our salvation:" but for all this compacted together, and the distinct explication of the manner how all this is wrought by Christ's resurrection, this is a felicity reserved, the peculiar prerogative of this text, brought out now and prepared for you, if you can but have patience till you see it opened. "God having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless," &c.

[Mal. iv. 2.]

Rom. iv. 25.

Rom. viii. [33,] 34.

Heb. v. 9.

In these words one fundamental difficulty there is, the clearing of which will be the first part of my task, and ground-work of my future discourse; and that is to enquire what is meant by sending Christ to bless, which when we have opened, there will remain but two particulars behind, the time of this sending, and the interpretation of this blessing; the time of this sending after His resurrection, God having raised up, sent Him. The interpretation of this blessing, or wherein it consists, "In turning every one," &c.

SERM. IX.

I begin with the first of these, to clear the fundamental difficulty, or explain what is meant by sending to bless.

All sorts of arts and sciences have their τεχνολογήματα, their peculiar phrases and words of art, which cannot be interpreted fully but by the critical observing their importance among those artists. Casaubon[c], I remember, observes it among the Deipnosophists, that they had their ἐπικυλίκια τεχνολογήματα, that none but Athenæus can interpret to us: and certainly the book of God and Christ that "spake as never man spake," must not be denied this privilege; among the many that might be referred to this head, two here we are fallen on together, the matter of our present enquiry, sending and blessing. The word שלח, to "send," and the Greek parallel to it, if we look it in common dictionaries, and in many places of the Scripture itself, is a word of most vulgar obvious notion, but if you will ask the Scripture-critic, you shall find in it sometimes a rich, weighty, precious importance; to design, or destine, to instal, or consecrate, to give commission for some great office, "How shall they preach unless they be sent?" and a hundred the like. Thus we hear of the sending of kings, judges, prophets; but especially of our spiritual rulers under the gospel: no other title assigned them, but that of שליחים or ἀπόστολοι, the *missi*, the sent, or the messengers of Christ,—the more shame for those that contemn this mission, lay violent hands on that sacred function, the meanest and lowest of the people,—to make one parallel more betwixt Jeroboam's kingdom, and ours, those παραχαράγματα, in Ignatius' phrase[d], "brass coins" of their own impressing, so contrary to the royal prerogative of heaven, ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως, in St. Peter's agonistical style, that run without any watch-word of God's to start them; yea, and run like Ahimaaz, outrun all others that were truly sent. The defect in our tongue for the expressing of this, is a little repaired by the use of the word "commission," which if you will here exchange for the word "sent," and so read it thus, "God having raised up His Son Jesus, gave Him commission to bless us," you will somewhat discern and remember the importance of this first phrase.

[John vii. 46.]

[Rom. x. 15.]

[2 Cor. viii. 23.]

[2 Kings xii. 31.]

[2 Pet. i. 20.]

[2 Sam. xviii. 23.]

[c] [Is. Casauboni animadv. in Athenæi Deipnosophistas, see c. ii. p. 7.]

[d] [S. Ignat. Epist. interpol. ad Magn. c. 5. Patr. Apost. ii. 55.]

SERM. IX.

And so again ברך, to "bless," and the εὐλογεῖν in the text, so fully answerable to it, though it be a vulgar style in all authors, yet a propriety it hath in this place, and in some others of Scripture, noting the office of a priest, to whom it peculiarly belongs to pronounce and pray for blessings, i. e. in this eminent sense, to bless others.

For there being two sorts of priests in the Pentateuch, or if you will, two acts of the same divine function, the one of blessing, the other of sacrificing, the one observable in the fathers of every family, in Genesis,—who therefore use solemnly to bless their children,—and after the enlarging of families into kingdoms, belonging to kings, and eminently and signally notified in Melchisedech; the other more conspicuous in Aaron, and his successors in the Jewish priesthood: both these are most eminently remarkable in our Christ, the one in His death, the other ever since His resurrection. The sacrificing part most clearly a shadow of that one great oblation on the altar of the cross for us, and in spite of Socinus, such a priest once was Christ, though but once, in spite of the Papists. Once, when He offered that one precious oblation of Himself, the same person both priest and sacrifice; and but once, no longer priest thus, than He was thus a sacrificing; this is His παραβατὸς ἱερωσύνη, or μὴ παραμένουσα, a priesthood not suffered to continue, the same minute determined His mortal life and mortal priesthood, buried the Aaronical rites and the Priest together. But for the Melchisedech priesthood, that of blessing in my text, that of intercession, powerful intercession, i. e. giving of grace sufficient to turn us; this is the office that now still belongs unto Christ, the peculiar grand office, to which that notion of Χριστὸς (to which Christ's durable unction) belongs, by which He was τετελειωμένος εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, "consecrate for evermore," parallel to that so frequent style of his, "a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech;" not that Melchisedech was a priest for ever, and Christ like him in that, but that Christ was to continue for ever such a priest as Melchisedech, in Genesis, was; or that His Aaronical priesthood had an end, one sacrifice, and no more; but His other Melchisedech priesthood was to last for ever; which you will more discern if you proceed to the

Gen. xiv. 19.

Heb. vii. 23.

Heb. vii. ult. [Ps. cx. 5; Heb. v. 6, 10; vi. 20; vii. 3, 11, 17, 21.]

second particular, the date of this sending, the time of His instalment into His priesthood, after His resurrection: "God having raised up, sent," &c. SERM. IX.

That the resurrection installed Christ to His eternal priestly office,—or to that part of it which was to endure for ever,—is a truth that nothing but inadvertence hath made men question; there is nothing more frequently insinuated in the Scripture; were not my text demonstrative enough, first "raised up," and then thus "sent" or installed, the fifth and seventh to the Hebrews would more than prove it: so in that fundamental grand prophecy, to which all that is said there refers, that in the one hundred and tenth Psalm, the priesthood of Christ is ushered in with a "Sit thou at My right hand," verse 1, ruling in the midst of enemies, verse 2, the day of His power, verse 3; all these certain evidences of His resurrection, and then, and not till then, verse 4, "the Lord hath sworn, &c. Thou art a priest for ever:" a mortal dying determinable priest He was before in His death, but now after His resurrection from that death, "a priest for ever." Once more, perhaps there may be some emphasis in the ἀνίσταται, 'ariseth,' "there ariseth another priest," or He ariseth another, an Aaronical priest in His death, but ἕτερος ἱερεὺς, a Melchisedech (i. e. another kind of) priest in His resurrection. Add to this that the Melchisedech priest must be like the type, a king as well as a priest,—which Christ as man was not till after His resurrection,—and so that other famous type of our Jesus, "Joshua the son of Josedek the high-priest, he shall be a priest upon the throne, and the counsel of peace,"—that grand consultation of reconciling sinners to God,—"shall be betwixt them both," in the union of that sceptre and that ephod, that mitre and that crown, the Χριστὸς βασιλεὺς, and ἱερεὺς, the regal and sacerdotal office of Christ; and as one, so the other, both dated alike from after the resurrection; ὅπερ ἔδει δεῖξαι, the thing that by this accumulation of Scripture testimonies, it was necessary to demonstrate. For the clearing of which truth, and reconciling or preventing all difficulties about it, please you to take it in these few propositions.

Heb. vii. 15.

Zech. vi. [11,] 13.

1. That the crucifixion of Christ was a sacrifice truly pro-

SERM. IX.

pitiatory, and satisfactory for the sins of the whole world,—and there is nothing further from this text or our present explication of it, than to derogate from the legality, the amplitude, extent, or precious value of this sacrifice.

Yea, and 2. that Christ Himself thus willingly offering, delivering up Himself for us, may in this be said a priest, or to have exercised in His death a grand act of priesthood.

But then, 3, this is an act of Aaronical priesthood which Heb. vii. 27. Christ was never to exercise again, having done it once, and so far distant from His "eternal priesthood." Or, to speak more clearly, an act of Christ this, as of a "second Adam," a [Is. liii. 5.] common person, ordered by the wisdom of God to "bear the chastisement of our peace," the "scape-goat" to carry all our [Lev.] xvi. 22. sins on His head into the "wilderness, into a land not inhabited," the ἄδης, in our Creed, to which He went; and so though it were typified by all the sacrifices of the priests, and though in it that whole body of rites were determined,—no more Aaronical priests seasonable after this "one sacrifice,"—yet still this is no part of the "eternal regal Melchisedech priesthood," that of powerful intercession, that of blessing us in the text; for though the death of Christ tend mightily toward the blessing of us, though there were a [Luke xxiii. 34.] wonderful act of intercession on the cross, "Father, forgive them," yet that powerful intercession, that for grace to make us capable of mercy, that blessing in this text, the power of conferring what He prays for, this it was to which the resurrection installed Him.

4. If all this will not satisfy, why then one way of clearing this truth further, I shall be able to allow you, that the death of Christ considered as a sacrifice, may under that notion pass not for an act of a priest *in facto esse*, but for a ceremony of His inauguration *in fieri;* thus in the eighth of Leviticus at the consecrating of Aaron and his sons, you shall find sacrifices used, "the ram, the ram of consecration," verse 22nd, and apportioned to that, this "Lamb of God" that by dying "taketh away the sins of the world," may pass for a lamb of consecration, the true critical im- Heb. ii. 10. portance of the τελειῶσαι διὰ παθημάτων, that the Captain of our salvation was to be consecrated by sufferings. This

death of His, that looks so like an act of Aaronical priesthood, is the preparative rite of consecrating Him to that great eternal priesthood, "after the order of Melchisedech," and this preparative most absolutely necessary both in respect of Christ and us, of Christ who was to "drink of the brook of the way" before "His head" should be "lifted up," "humbled to death," &c.; "wherefore God hath also highly exalted Him," for that suffering crowned Him; yea, and in respect of us too, who were to be ransomed by His death, before we could be blessed by His resurrection, delivered from the captivity of hell, before capable of that grace which must help us to heaven, which seems to me to be the descant of that plain song, "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren," i. e. as the eighteenth verse explains it, to "suffer being tempted," to undergo the infirmities and mortality of our flesh, "that He might be a merciful and faithful high-priest;" &c.; His infirmities and effusion of His blood are not this priesthood of itself, but the qualifying of the second Person in the Trinity to become a high-priest, and that a merciful and faithful one, merciful to pardon slips, and faithful to uphold from falling, and so a priest such as it is most for our interest to have. And so once more the dream is out that Artemidorus[e] mentions of one; he dreamed he was crucified, and the consequent was, *ἱερεὺς ἀνελήφθη*, "he was taken up to be a priest of Diospolis;" and by the way, let me tell my clergy brethren, if that shall prove the consequent of our priesthood, which was the presage of Christ's, the pains, the contumelies, yea and death of that cross, what is this but a blessed lot that hath brought us so near our Christ, and a means to consecrate us too to our *βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα*, "to be kings and priests for ever" in heaven.

SERM. IX.

[Ps. cx. 7.] Phil. ii. Heb. ii. 9. Heb. ii. 17, 18. [1Pet.ii.9.]

I have thus far laboured to clear this doctrine, calculated the time of Christ's instalment to His eternal priesthood, and found it exactly the same with the era here in this text, not till after the resurrection, to which I shall only add one final grand proof of all, which will sum up all that hath

[e] [*Μένανδρος ἐν Ἑλλάδι ἔδοξεν ἐσταυρῶσθαι ἔμπροσθεν ἱεροῦ Διὸς Πολιέως, καὶ ἱερεὺς ἀποδειχθεὶς ἐκείνου τοῦ θεοῦ, λαμπρότερος ἐγένετο καὶ εὐπορώτερος.* Artemidor. Oneirocrit., lib. iv. c. 49.]

SERM. IX.

Matt. [xxviii. 18.]

[Acts xiii. 48.]

[1 John ii. 2.]

[Josh. xx. 6.]

[Rom. viii. 35.]

been hitherto said, that parting speech of Christ's, "All power is given unto Me both in heaven and earth," that you know was after the resurrection, and so from thence that power was dated, and that commission of blessing that here we speak of,—the act of His eternal priesthood,—is His intercession, that His powerful intercession, that His giving of that grace which He intercedes for, that the blessing in this text; and so the commission of blessing was given Him, not till after the resurrection. And believe it, though it look all this while like a rough sapless speculation, there is yet somewhat in it, that may prove very useful and ordinable to practice, a hint if not a means of removing one of the harmfulest scandals and impediments of good life that is to be met with. We are Christians all, and by that claim, τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον, on rank, and on march toward eternal life; and yet many of us live like so many Mahometans or China infidels, quite out of all form of obedience to the commands of Christ, we do not reverence Him so much as to pretend toward serving Him, not advance so far as but to be hypocrites in that matter, live in all the sensuality and vileness in the world, and yet live confidently, resolve we have done what is required of us by Christ, can justify our state for such as God is pleased with; and if we be called to account, the anchor of all this unreasonable false hope of ours is most constantly this, that Christ our Priest hath propitiated for us, we fly to our city of refuge till our Priest be dead, and then we are quit by proclamation, out of the reach of the avenger of blood. It is the death of Christ we depend on to do all our task for us; His priestly, not regal office, we are resolved to be beholden to, in that we have Christ the Sacrificer, Christ the Reconciler, Christ the Satisfier, and these are Christs enough to keep us safe, without the aid of Christ the King, that judaical unedifying notion of a reigning Messias, and then, *quis separabit?* what sin, what devils, what legion, what act, what habit, what custom, what indulgence in sin, i. e. what Tophet, what hell "shall be able to separate us from the love," the favour, the heaven "of God?"

He that hath Christ the Priest, hath all; he that believes in the sufferings, hath Christ the Priest, though not the

SERM. IX.

King; hath the faith, though not the works, i. e. the righteousness, though not the heathenish morality; the protestant, orthodox part, though not the popery; the anti-christianism of a Christian, and so, is but the richer for that want; hath the greater portion in the sufferings of Christ, by the abundance of those sins He suffered for; the more of the priest is ours, by how much the less of the king is discernible in us. Having driven our unchristian lives to this principle, this solemn conceit of ours, that the priestly office of Christ,—to which, if rightly understood, we owe all our salvation,—is nothing but the death of that Christ, methinks it were now possible to convince the secure fiduciary of the error and sophistry of his former way, to rob him of his beloved cheat, now that we have proved so clear, that Christ commenced His eternal priesthood,—that on which all our blessedness depends,—from the *ἀναστήσας*, not till after His resurrection. For "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth," [Cant. i. 7.] and mourneth and bleedeth for in secret, thou carnal confident, that hast wearied thyself in the greatness of thy way, thy [Is. lvii. 10.] profane wild-goose chase of sin, and yet hast not said, there is no hope, thou that wilt profane and be saved too, riot and be saved too, reconcile faction, rebellion, sacrilege, oppression, oaths, carnality, all the unchristian practices in the world,—the confutation of the whole gospel,—with salvation: tell me, I say, what Christ it is, thou wilt be tried or saved by; by Christ the King? I am confident thou wert never so impudent to venture thy rebellions to that cognizance: well, it is Christ the Priest thou so dependest on; and why Christ the Priest? Why? because He hath sacrificed Himself for thee. Now let me tell thee, 1. That some have guessed shrewdly, that though Christ died for all the sinners and sins in the world, yet His sufferings being but finite in duration, though infinite in respect of the person of the sufferer, will not prove a *λύτρον ἰσόῤῥοπον*, a proportionable ransom for thy sins; I mean, the impenitent sinner's sins, in duration infinite, being, as they are, undetermined, uncut off by repentance. Thou must return, reform, confess and forsake, or else thou hast outsinned the very sufferings of Christ, outspent that vast ransom, outdamned salvation itself: that may be a conviction *ad hominem* perhaps, and

SERM. IX.

therefore I mentioned it in the first place. But then, 2. thou art, it seems, all this while mistaken in thy priest, thou art, it seems, all for the Aaronical, and hast not yet thought of the Melchisedech priest; thou art all for the sacrificer, and never dreamest of the blesser. Thou layest all thy weight on the cross of Christ, and art ready to press it down to hell with thee, with leaning only, but not crucifying one lust on it; never thinkest of being risen with Christ, the condition so indispensably necessary to give us claim to the benefit of His death, and so in effect thou leavest Christ in the grave, and thyself in that mournful case of the despairing disciples, *speraveramus*, "we had hoped," but never lookest after a resurrection. It was St. Paul's saying, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we were of all men most miserable." I suppose it is in this life only, not of us, but of Christ on this earth, for it is brought to prove Christ's resurrection there, and it follows immediately, "but now is Christ raised," and if that be the sense of the ζωῇ ταύτῃ there, the "this life of Christ" contains also His death under it, for both those together it is, that must make up the opposite to the resurrection. And then I shall enlarge the Apostle's words, though not sense, If in the earthly life and death of Christ we had hope only, a sad life, and a contumelious death, if there were no such thing as a resurrection to help bless us, "we were of all men the most miserable;" hadst thou no other priest, but the sacrificer, the mortal finite Aaronical priest, nothing but the ransom of Christ's death,—which though it be never so high a price, is yet finally unavailable to many for whom it was paid, He bought them that are damned for denying Him, the wilful sinner "treads under foot the Son of God, profanes the blood of the covenant by which he is sanctified," and so there is destruction enough still behind for the impenitent wretch, after all that Christ hath suffered for thee,—what forms of ejulation and lamentation were enough for thee, "alas my brother! ah Lord! or ah his glory!" what mourning or wailing were thy portion? Tell me, wilt thou be content to leave thy father before he hath blessed thee? Jacob would not do so with the angel, but would wrestle his thigh out of joint, rather than thus part with him, and even

[Luke xxiv. 21.]

[1 Cor. xv. 14—19.]

ver. 20.

2 Pet. ii. 1.

Heb. x. 29.

[Jer. xxii. 18.]

[Gen. xxxii. 26.]

the profane Esau will run and weep bitterly for it; and then art thou more nice and tender than that smooth Jacob, wretchless than that profane Esau, if thou contentest thyself only to have brought Christ to the grave, that state of curse, and never lookest out for the blessing provided for thee in the resurrection: mistake me not, I would not drive you from this cross of Christ, discourage you from that most necessary act of faith, the apprehending the crucified Saviour; no, if my lot had fallen on a Good-Friday, I would have spent my whole hour on that one theme, and "known nothing among you but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified:" only my desire is, that you will not allow one act of faith to turn projector, to get all the custom from the rest, that you will permit Christ to live in you as well as to die for you, to bless as well as to satisfy, to "rise again for your justification," as well as "to be delivered up for your offences;" that you will attend Him at Galilee as well as at Golgotha, think of the triumphant as well as the crucified Saviour, the Melchisedech, as well as the mortal Aaron, priest. And not only to think of His rising, I must tell you, but count of a work, a mighty important necessary work, that of turning, in this text, to be wrought on us, and in us by that resurrection now, after the pardon impetrated by His passion; I say, not only to think of and believe Him risen, the devil hath as much of that thought, as frequent repeated acts of that belief as you, and there is not such magic in that faith, or fancy, as to bear you to heaven by meditating on His journey thither, to elevate you by gazing on His ascension. No, that faith must be in our hearts too, that principle of action, and practice, they must open to him as the tulip to the rising sun, or as the "everlasting doors" to that "King of glory," give Him an alacrious hospitable reception, as the friend to the friend; as the diseased to the physician; deliver themselves up most willing patients to all His blessing warming influences, to all His medicinable saving methods, that He may sanctify, and reform, bless and turn, "live and reign in our hearts by faith," and prove a Shiloh in the critics' notion of the word, from שלה *fortunatus est*, "the work of the Lord," for which He raised him, thrive and "prosper in His hands." We must rise with Christ as well

SERM. IX.

[Gen. xxvii. 30, 34.]

[1 Cor. ii. 2.]

[Rom. iv. 25.]

[Ps. xxiv. 7.]

[Eph. iii. 17.]

[Is. liii. 10.]

SERM. IX.

as die with Him, do as "the bodies of the saints that slept," arise and come out of our graves of sin, go into the holy city and appear to many. Our *resurgere* must be attended with an *ire*,—an *ire* of obedience. "Go, and he goeth;" an *ire* of motion too, an active stirring vital life, not sit only or creep, but go and walk, and "run the way of God's commandments,"—and then 2. we must have a term for that motion, a matter for that obedience, an *ubi* for that *ire*, and that *civitatem sanctam*, 1. the city, and then the holy; the life of the man, the citizen, the common-wealth's man, "risen with Christ," in every of these capacities; and then the *sanctam*, a superaddition of all sanctity, of all that is Christian, and in all these notions we must *ire* and *præire*, go before as a δαδοῦχος, and so do that great act of charity, attract others after us by exemplary lightsome actions, *apparere multis*, conduct the stray multitude to heaven. That this is the benefit of Christ's resurrection, and that there is no faith or belief in this article to be counted of, but that that is thus improved, thus evidenced, is the special thing that I meant to persuade you from these words, which I shall endeavour to do by reserving the remainder of the time for the third and last particular, the interpretation of this priestly office of Christ, to which the resurrection installed Him, or wherein this blessing consists, "in turning," &c.

Matt. xxviii. [52,] 53.

[Ps. cxix. 32.]

For the equal dealing with which, I conceive myself obliged to shew you these three things.

1. What is meant by "turning away every one from his iniquities."

2. What the dependence is betwixt this and the resurrection of Christ.

3. How this turning is an interpretation of blessing, "God having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless us, in turning," &c.

For the first, every syllable will be a hint of direction for this matter, 1. "Turn," that one syllable is the best description of the great saving grace of repentance, μετάθεσις τοῦ νοῦ in Athanasius'[f] phrase, the inverting, the transposing, or the

[f] [μετανοία δὲ ἐστὶν οὐχ ἡ τῶν γονάτων κλίσις, ἀλλ' ἡ ἀποχὴ τοῦ κακοῦ, καὶ τὸ πονεῖν, καὶ θρηνεῖν, καὶ δέεσθαι τοῦ Θεοῦ ὑπὲρ τῆς τῶν προημαρτηκότων ἀφέ-

turning of the soul, and less than that will not prove sufficient; humbling, and confessing, and grieving, and hating will not serve the turn, these are but initial preparatives to that last hand, but dull lines, but lifeless monograms, which that vital pencil in this text, that of turning, must fill up; the want of this one accomplishment is the ruining of all, makes that vast chasm as wide as that betwixt Dives and Abraham's bosom; the sorrowing, confessing, self-hating (if unreformed) sinner may fry in hell, when none but the returning prodigal can find admission to heaven: and that for the "turning." The manner of which will be worth the observing also; the word *ἀποστρέφω* here is common to Christ and us, but in a different power and sense, He by way of efficience, we of non-resistance, active in Christ, and but neutral in us, He to turn us, and then we to turn, not to resist that power of His grace, not to go on when He turns: so in other phrases of Scripture, He to draw, and then we to run after Him; God to work in us "both to will and to do," and then we to "work out our own salvation;" He to knock, and we open; He to rouse the sleeper, and we to "awake," and "rise from the dead;" we to obey His grace, but His grace most necessary thus to turn us: or yet more plainly, Christ to use all the means of turning us, that can belong to God, dealing with reasonable creatures, and such as He means to crown, or punish; His call, His promise, His threats, His grace, preventing, exciting, assisting, in a word, all but violence and coaction,—which is destructive of all judgment to come,—and we not to resist, to grieve, to quench those blessing methods, to turn when He will have us turn. Then "every one of you," the extent of that grace, consequent to that resurrection, "He is gone up on high, hath led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men," men indefinitely there, and all flesh in the other prophecy,—"I will pour out My spirit on all flesh,"—and here every one of you, i.e. primarily every one of you Jews, "unto you first," in the beginning of the verse, but then from them diffusively to all others; the *σωτήριος χάρις*, "hath appeared unto all men," *παιδεύουσα*,

[Phil. ii. 12, 13.]

[Eph. v. 14.]

[Eph. iv. 7.] [ver. 8.]

[Acts ii. 17.]

Tit. ii. 11. [ver. 12.]

σεως· διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο λέγεται μετανοία, ὅτι μετατίθησι τὸν νοῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ κακοῦ πρὸς τὸ ἀγαθόν.—S. Athanas. Quæst. cxxx. in Script., inter spuria Ed. Ben., tom. ii. p. 335.]

SERM. IX.

&c., taking them all into the school of discipline, teaching them to live soberly, and justly, and piously in this world; and again "every one," this turning is indispensably necessary, and therefore to every self-flatterer, "O be not deceived," &c., and "bring forth fruit," &c., and "think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham," &c. There is no dispensation for Abraham's children, for the elect, for men of such and such persuasions, no special privilege for favourites, no postern gate, or back stairs for some choice *privados*, all their prerogative is the *ὑμῖν πρῶτον*, earlier grace, or more grace, and consequently so much the more obligation, but then "except you repent," and return, "you shall all perish." Thirdly, "from his iniquities." Iniquities, first, and then "his" iniquities; not the *παραπτώματα*, every legal breach, or declination, the resurrection and grace of Christ will not thus return us to a paradise on earth, will not thus sublime us quite out of our frail sinner-state, "till our mortality be swallowed up with life," but the *πονηρίαι*, villanies and wickednesses of the carnal man, the wasting acts and noisome habits of an unsanctified life, from these, Christ died and rose, that He might turn us. There is not a more noxious mistake, a more fatal piece of stoicism amongst Christians, than not to observe the different degrees and elevations of sin, one of the first, another of the second magnitude, one *ignis fatuus*, or false "star differing from another," in dishonour, though not "in glory," some spots that are spots of sons, that by a general repentance, without particular victory over them, by an habitual resolution to amend all that is amiss, without actual getting out of these frailties, are capable of God's mercy in Christ, reconcilable with a regenerate estate, such are our *ἀσθενείαι*, our weaknesses, ignorances, and the like; and some that are not the spots of sons, they which "do them, shall not," without actual reformation, and victory, and forsaking, enter, or "inherit the kingdom of God," after all that Christ hath done and suffered for them; such our deliberate acts and habits against light, against grace, the *πονηρίαι* in the text; and let me tell you, the not pondering these differences, not observing the grains and scruples of sin, how far the *ἀσθενείαι* extend, and when they are overgrown into *πονηρίαι*, is the ground (that I say

[1 Cor. vi. 9; Matt. iii. 8, 9.]

[Luke xiii. 3.]

[2 Cor. v. 4, 5.]

[1 Cor. xv. 41.]

[Gal. v. 21.]

SERM. IX.

no more) of a deal of desperate profaneness; we cannot keep from all sin, and therefore count it lost labour to endeavour to abstain from any: having demonstrated ourselves men by the *ἀσθενείαι*, we make no scruple to evidence ourselves devils too by the *πονηρίαι*; the desperation of perfect sinlessness makes us secure in all vileness, and being engaged in weakness, we advance to madness; either hope to be saved with our greatest sins, or fear to be damned for our least; and having resolved it impossible to do all, resolve securely to do none; our infirmities may damn us, and our rebellions can do no more; our prayers, our alms have sin in them, and our murders and sacrileges can be but sinful: and so if the devil or our interests will take the pains to solicit it, the deadliest sin shall pass for as innocent a creature, as tame a stingless serpent, as the fairest Christian virtue, and all this upon the not observing the weight of the *πονηρίαι* here, which Christ rose from the grave on purpose to turn us from, and from which whosoever is not turned, shall never rise unto life. Add unto this the *αὐτοῦ*, the "his" iniquities, as it refers to the author of them, and this is the bill of challenge and claim to those accursed possessions of ours; nothing is so truly, so peculiarly ours as our sins; and of those, as our *πονηρίαι*; our frailties, our lapses, our ignorances, the diseases and infelicities of our nature, which may insensibly fall from us, *vix ea nostra voco;* but our wasting, wilful acts, and indulged habits, those great vultures and tigers of the soul, they are most perfectly our own, the naturalest brats, and cruelest progeny, that ever came from our loins; nor *Ζεὺς*, nor *μοῖρα*, nor *ἐριννὺς*, in Agamemnon's[g] phrase, nor God, nor fate, nor fiend, are any way chargeable with them: the first were blasphemy, the second stoicism and folly to boot, the third a bearing false witness against the devil himself, robbing him of his great fundamental title of *διάβολος*, calumniator, and proving those that thus charge him the greatest devils of the twain; and all this is but one part of the *αὐτοῦ* here, the "his" &c. as it refers to the author. And *αὐτοῦ* again, the "his" as it is a note of eminence, his peculiar, prime, reigning sins, that all others like the *ὁ δῆμος*, or communality are fain to be subject to, some-

[g] [Hom. Il. T. 87.]

SERM. IX.

[1 Kings viii. 38.]

times a monarch-dictator-single sin, "the plague in his own heart," a principality of ambition, of pride, of lust, of covetousness, that all others at their distance administer unto; sometimes an optimacy of a few, all prime coequal in their power; and sometimes a democracy, or popular state, a whole Egypt full of locusts in one breast, a Gad, a troop or shoal of sins, all leading us captive to their shambles; and thus our sovereign sins, as different as our tempers, and every one the *αὐτοῦ* here, every man from his iniquities. The sum of this first prospect is briefly this, "the turning every one from his iniquities," wherein Christ's blessing us consists, is His giving of grace sufficient to work an universal, sincere, impartial, thorough change of every sinner, from all his reigning, wilful sins. The sincerity, though not perfection of the new creature, and the dependence betwixt this and the resurrection of Christ, is the second, or next enquiry.

The resurrection of Christ in the Scripture style signifies not always the act of rising from the dead, but the consequent state after that rising, by the same proportion that

[2 Cor. v. 17.]

καινὴ κτίσις, "the new creation," and the being regenerate or born of God, signify the state of sonship, and not the act of begetting only; so that in brief, the *ἀναστήσας* here, the raising up of Jesus, signifies the new state, to which Christ was inaugurate at His resurrection, and contains under it all the severals of ascension, of sitting at the right hand of power, of the mission of the Holy Ghost, and His powerful intercession for us in heaven ever since, and to the end of the world; and this is the notion of the resurrection of Christ, which is the blesser, which hath that influence on our turning; it will not be amiss to shew you how.

And here I shall not mention that moral influence of His resurrection upon ours, by the example of His powerful raising out of the grave, to preach to us the necessity of our shaking off the grave-clothes, that cadaverous, chill, noisome

[Coloss. iii. 1.]

estate of sin, *καὶ συνεγείρεσθαι τῷ Χριστῷ*, to "rise again with Him;" this is the blessing in the text; but this, the example of Christ might preach long enough to dead souls, before it would be hearkened unto, although the truth is, the ancient Church by their setting apart these holy days for the baptizing of all that were baptized, and the whole space be-

twixt this and Pentecost, and every Dominical in the year, for the gesture of standing in all their services, that no man might come near the earth, at the time that Christ rose from it, did certainly desire to enforce this moral on us, that our souls might now turn, and be blessed, rise and be conformed to the image of Christ's resurrection. Blessed Lord! that it might be thus exemplary to us at this time. But to omit this, the special particulars wherein the resurrection of Christ, as our blesser, hath its influence on our turning, are briefly these three: SERM. IX.

1. The bestowing on us some part of that Spirit by which Christ was raised out of the grave. Consider Rom. viii. 11, and it is all that I shall say to you of that first particular. "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you," that Spirit of power by which Christ was raised out of the grave, is the very efficient of our turning, our new birth, the author of our present blessedness, and the pledge of our future immortality; God having raised His Son by His Spirit, anointed Him with that Spirit to work the like miracles daily on our souls, in "blessing, in turning every one," &c.; and that is the first thing.

2. Christ's resurrection hath a hand in blessing, in turning from iniquity, in respect to that solemn mission of the Holy Ghost promised before, and performed immediately after His ascension. This not person, I mean, but office of the Holy Ghost, in settling a pastorage in the Church, and to it the consequent power and necessity of preaching, administering Sacraments, governing, censuring, all which were the effects of the Holy Ghost's descending, and the direct interpretation of the λάβετε πνεῦμα, then, and ever since then. To which if you please to add the promise of the annexion of the Spirit, and the invisible grace of God to the orderly use of these, so far that the preaching of the gospel,—not only that manner of preaching among us, that hath gotten the monopoly of all the service of God into its patent, the only thing that many of us pay all our devotion to; but any other way of making known the gospel of Christ, the doctrine of the second covenant,—is called διακονία πνεύματος, the ad- [John xx. 22.] 2 Cor. iii. 8.

SERM. IX.

ministration, or means of dispensing the Spirit to us, and the Sacrament *κοινωνία αἵματος*, the communication of the blood of Christ, yea and the censures, no carnal, weak, blunt "weapons of our warfare," but "mighty through God," &c.; you have then a second energy of His resurrection toward our turning, so great, that He that holds out against this method of power and grace, and will not turn nor understand after all this, shall never be capable of any other means of blessing, of working that great work for him: and so you see the second ground of dependence between the resurrection, and blessing, or turning. O that it might work its design upon us, that "to-day we would hear the voice," that cries so loud to us out of heaven, the last perhaps numerically, I am sure the last in specie or kind, the last artifice, this of the Word, and Sacraments, that is ever to be hoped for to this end, "to bless us, to turn us every one from our," &c.

[1 Cor. x. 16.]

2 Cor. x. 4.

[Ps. xcv. 8; Hab. iii. 7, 15.]

3. The resurrection hath to do in blessing, and turning, in respect of Christ's intercession, that prime act of His Melchisedech priesthood, His powerful intercession, i. e. in effect conferring of grace on us; thus Rom. viii. 34, where that weighty business of justifying is laid more on the resurrection than death of Christ, "It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again." It is thus enlarged in the next words, "who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us;" His intercession, powerful intercession "at the right hand of God,"—a consequent of God's "raising up His Son Jesus,"—hath a main influence on turning first, and then justifying the ungodly: and so Heb. vii. 25, "Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost," *σώζειν εἰς τὸ παντελὲς*, to save them for good and all, deliver them from all kind of assailants, from sin, from themselves, from wrath, from hell, though not absolutely all, yet those that come unto God by Him, those that turn when He will have them turn, "seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." Will you see this more clearly? why then thus. There are three degrees of grace, preventing, exciting, assisting: the first for conversion, the second for sanctifying, the third for perseverance. And two acts of turning, being already premised, for the beginning of that blessing work,

SERM. IX.

1. by the power of that Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead; then, 2. by the descent of the Holy Ghost,—the first as the seed sown, the second as the rain and sunshine to bring it up,—there is yet a third required for the earing and hardening of the corn, that of God's giving increase, for the consummating this weighty affair, for the confirming and establishing those that are initially blest and turned into a kind of angelical state of perseverance: and to this it is that Christ's continual intercession belongs, for that is peculiarly for disciples, for those that are believers, Christians already, that they may be preserved and kept in that state,—as for St. Peter in the time of shock, of tempest, when Satan is at his *expetivit*,—that if we be permitted to be tempted, yet our "faith may not fail." Another copy of this intercession you have John xvii.; the whole chapter is a prescript form of it, a platform of what He now daily performs in heaven. Look in the eleventh verse, "Holy Father, keep through Thine own Name," own power, "those whom Thou hast given Me," those that are believers already: and in the fifteenth, "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil one;" not for immunity from temptations, for an impeccable state, but for a sufficiency of grace to keep, to sustain them in time of temptation, that they may be able to stand. So that this intercession of Christ is apportioned and adequate to the προκόπτοντες, "proficients," those that are believers already, disciples,—or others to come that shall be such, and when they are prayed for are considered under that notion, as it is clear, ver. 20, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also that shall believe on Me through their word,"—a direct notation who they are that this daily intercession for keeping, for perseverance, belongs to, the believers, faithful disciples, and none others, "I pray for them, I pray not for the world," ver. 9. Other prayers He can allow for the world, the veriest incarnate devils in it, the very crucifiers, "Father, forgive them;" but this prayer for perseverance, for keeping, is only for the "them," the believers there: the impenitent unbeliever cannot have his portion in that, unless he would have Christ pray to damn him irreversibly, to keep him in his impenitence, "to seal him up unto the day of perdition."

Luke xxii. 32.

[Luke xxiii. 34.]

[2 Pet. iii. 7.]

SERM. IX.

You see from hence by way of result or corollary, what it is that our perseverance in the faith and favour of God is imputable to, not any fatal contrivance for some special confidents, that their sins shall not be able to separate them, not any such *ἀπολύτρωσις*, as Marcus his scholars in Irenæus[h] pretended to, that by it they were *φύσει πνευματικοὶ*, "naturally spiritual," that all the debaucheries in the world could no more vitiate them, than the sun-beams are profaned by the dunghill which they shine on, or the gold by the sluttery it may be mixed with, that by the shield of the mother of heaven, whatever they did, they were *ἀόρατοι τῷ κριτῇ*, "invisible to the judge." No such comforts and hopes as these, of perseverance in sin, and favour with God at once, of making good our union with God, when we are in the gall of bitterness, of being justified, when we are not sanctified; that magical spell, that fastens us in a circle,—and then whatever we do there, the devil cannot approach us,—is the very hope of the hypocrite in Job, and that hope as hypocritical as himself, perisheth, and vanisheth, when he hath most rest to set upon it. *Νεότης ἐλπίδος πλήρης*, saith Aristotle[i], the debauched young man can entertain himself with such daring courageous hopes as these, *γῆρας δὲ δύσελπι*, but old age and death-beds are not of so good assurance. There is but one principle, I say, of our perseverance to be depended on, that of Christ's daily intercession for the true humble disciple, that his faith may not fail, and that intercession, an act of power in Christ, to give what He thus prays for, "all power is given unto Me," and so in effect, a doing and giving whatever is required on God's part to the working of this blessed work upon our souls, a concurrence, an actual donation of minutely assistance to them that humbly wait and beg for it, and that, secondly, receive it, and make use of it when it is given. That double condition is indispensably required on our parts to the obtaining of this grace, as you may see it in the *habenti dabitur*, the parable of the talent: and Heb. vii. 25, "He is able to save them that come unto God by Him,

[Job xxvii. 8—10.]

[h] [S. Iren. adv. Hær. i. 9. vid. note in p. 160.]

[i] [*καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πρὸς τὸ πίνειν εἰς μέθην πάντες ἔχουσι προθύμως, ὅτι πάντας ὁ οἶνος ὁ πολὺς εὐέλπιδας ποιεῖ, καθάπερ ἡ νεότης τοὺς παῖδας· τὸ μὲν γὰρ γῆρας δύσελπι ἐστὶν, ἡ δὲ νεότης ἐλπίδος πλήρης.*—Aristot. Probl. xxx. 1. 27.]

seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them:" the ability to save and deliver out of the tempter's hand, to give perseverance, is explained by His continual intercession, but that only to those that "come unto God by Him," the pious disciple, and true Christian, the worshipper of God that doth His will, that first begs, and then doth not resist and grieve that Spirit of His,—as Heb. v. 9, He is "author of salvation;" to whom? "to all those that obey Him,"—He is "able to save them;" as if Christ were not able to save any others, to give any other perseverance,—as He could not do miracles in His own country, because of their unbelief. The truth is, His decree and oath hath manacled Him, not to work such miracles of mercies, prodigies of perseverance for the profane impenitent, the either spiritual or carnal presumer. You see now the dependence betwixt the *ἀναστήσας*, on one side, and the *εὐλογεῖν* and *ἀποστρέφειν*, on the other; the rising, on one side, and the blessing and turning, on the other. I proceed to my last particular, that the turning is but a periphrasis of blessing, "to bless us in turning," &c.

SERM. IX.

[Matt. xi. 57; Mark vi. 5.]

And I would it were in my power instead of demonstrating to your brain to preach this home to your affections, to persuade you and convince you of this great truth, the belief of which your felicity here, and eternity hereafter, so much depends on; could you but acknowledge the *ὅτι*, that there is any such thing as blessedness in a regenerate life, discern this mystery of godliness, the present joyous estate, that lies folded up in the new creature, it is impossible you should be any longer in love with perishing. There may be perhaps some smooth, pleasant parts in sin that the beast about you may delight in, some entertainment for that carnal brute; but what a poor acquisition is that delight, to tempt thee out of blessedness, to rob thee of such inestimable treasures! A piteous exchange this, make the best of it: but when that momentary joy is not to be had neither, when there is so little, so nothing even of transitory carnal pleasure in it, then, "Return, O Shulamite, return," let not the prodigal outwit thee, out-thrive thee, rise up in judgment against thee, and condemn thee; he, after the exhausting not only of his patrimony, but of his flesh, a crest-fallen degenerous prodigal, a kind of Lycanthropos Nebuchadnezzar,—but in worse com-

[Cant. vi. 13.]

[Dan. iv. 33.]

SERM. IX.

pany,—driven from men to swine, which of all other creatures are unfittest to preach returning,—their ocular nerves, saith Plutarch, are so placed, that they can never come to see heaven, till they are laid upon their backs,—yet even this (guest of swine) prodigal can at last think fit to return to his father; O let this prodigal turn preacher,—as such sometimes, when they have run out of all, are wont to do,—I shall give him the text on which I shall be confident he will be very rhetorical, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul."

[Ps. cxvi. 7.]

Again consider the τί, what blessedness is, and that may possibly work upon you; other excellencies there are, that may set you out in the eyes of men, generosity, obligingness, wisdom, learning, courage, &c., and every of these can be thought fit to be some sober man's idol. And yet the utmost that can belong to these, is to be praiseworthy: and then what proportion is there betwixt all these, and one such heroic excellency, of which the philosopher can say[j], "praise is too poor a reward for them, we count them blessed."

O then if there be any consolation in Christ, any virtue, any praise, if any so noble a quality as ambition be left in you, if any spark of that vestal flame, any aspiring to that which will ennoble and sublime your natures, any design on blessedness, behold and remember the turning in this text, nay, if you are but so well-natured as to wish a poor piteous accursed kingdom out of the jaws of so many hells, and capable of some return toward blessedness again, "fulfil you my joy." Away with those objections and prejudices we have to repentance, that it is a rugged, thorny, galling way, a dull, melancholy, joyless state; whatever you can miss, whatever quarrel in it, it will be abundantly repaired and satisfied in this one of blessedness; send me all the torments and miseries of this malicious age, the inventions of wit, and cruelty, all the diseases, that the heathens' fear had deified, and in the midst of these a present, instant blessedness, and I shall certainly defy them all; give me blessedness upon the rack, upon the wheel, and if you will suppose it possible, in hell itself, and I will never ask father Abraham's favour or allay to those flames, I shall not doubt but to enjoy that any

[Phil. ii. 1; iv. 8.]

[Phil. ii. 2.]

[j] [Aristot. Eth. Nic., lib. i. cap. 12.]

thing, that hath blessedness in it. The very heathens, saith St. Austin[k], had a great design upon one treasure that they found they had lost, used all means they could think would contribute toward the recovery of it; and in that quest went at last, saith he, and gave their souls to the devil, to get purity for those souls. It were then but reason that you would give your souls unto God to purchase it, that you would set a turning, a purifying, when the same compendium renders you pure and blest together, when the being happier than you were before, is all that you pay to be so for ever.

I have tired you with preaching that, that would have been more seasonable to have prayed for you, that God having, as on this day, "raised up His Son Jesus," will vouchsafe to send Him into every of our hearts, to bless us, to bless this accursed, miserable kingdom, this shaking, palsy Church, this broken state, this unhappy nation, this every poor sinner soul, by "turning" all, and "every one from his iniquities," by giving us all that only matter of our peace and serenity here, and pledge of our eternal felicity hereafter; which God of His infinite mercy grant us all, for His Son Jesus' sake, whom He hath thus raised. To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed, as our only tribute, the honour, &c.

[k] [S. August. de Civ. Dei, lib. x. c. 10. Op., tom. vii. p. 247, C.]

SERMON X.

PREPARED AT CARISBROOK CASTLE, BUT NOT PREACHED.

GOD'S COMPLAINT AGAINST REVOLTERS.

ISAIAH i. 5.

Why should you be stricken any more? you will revolt more and more.

SERM. X.

IT is a heavy complaint of God's, and though expressed without much noise, yet in a deep melting hearty passion, not only in the verse next before my text, with heaven and earth called to be witnesses of the complaint, but with a little varying of the expression, every where else throughout the Prophets, that "Israel doth not know, God's people doth not consider." All the arts of discipline and pedagogy had been used to teach them knowledge and consideration, i. e., to bring them to a sight and sense of their estate; lectures, warnings, chidings, blows, shaking and rousing, and hastening them, if it were possible, to awake them out of that lethargic, senseless condition. The whole people used like that proud king of Babylon, driven from men, set to live and converse with the beasts of the field,—such were the Chaldeans, whither they were carried captive,—if so be as it fared with him, so it might possibly succeed with them; the field be a more gainful school than the palace had been, that by that means at least they might "lift up their eyes to heaven, and their understanding return to them;" turned from men into beasts, that that stranger metamorphosis might be wrought on them, a transformation from men into men, from ignorant, brutish, into prudent, considering men; nay, delivered up even unto Satan by way of discipline, that Satan might teach them sense; the plagues of Egypt, of Sodom, of hell let loose upon them, to try whether like the rubbing and the smarting of the fish's gall, it might restore these blind Tobits to their eyes and souls again. To work the same work, if it be possible, upon us, is, I profess, my

Dan. iv. [34.]

[1 Cor. v. 5.]

business and only errand at this time. There hath been a great deal of pains taken by God to this purpose; doctrine and discipline, instructions and corrections, and all utterly cast away upon us hitherto, the "whole head sick, and the whole heart faint," in the words next after my text; which you must not understand as ordinarily men do of the sins of that people, that those were the "wounds, and bruises, and putrified sores,"—give me leave to tell you that is a mistake for want of considering the context,—but of judgments, heavy judgments, diseases, piteous diseases, both on head and heart, epilepsies, racking pains in the head; the whole kingdom may complain in the language of the Shunamite's child, "O my head, my head;" nay, in the prophet's, "the crown is fallen from our head," the crown of our head torn and fallen from our head, and the heart in terrible fainting fits, every foot ready to overcome; from the "sole of the foot to the crown of the head," from one extreme part of the nation to another, nothing but distress or oppression, suffering or acting direful tragedies, misery or impiety,—the latter the more fatal symptom, the greater distress of the two,—and yet "no man layeth it to heart," England "will not know, will not consider."

[Is. i. 6.] [2 Kings iv. 19.] [Is. i. 3.]

The truth is, the deformities which are in ourselves, we are such partial self-parasites that there is no seeing in a direct line, no coming to that prospect but by reflection; shall we therefore bring the elephant to the water, and there shew him and amaze him with the sight and ugliness of his proboscis? The state of the Jews is that water where we may see the image of this present kingdom most perfectly delineated in every limb and feature; its prosperity, its pride, its warnings, its provocations, its captivities, its contumelious using of the prophets, scorning the messengers from God that came to reprieve them; at length its fatal presages, the deadly feuds, ζηλωταὶ and σικάριοι, zealots and brothers of the sword, ploughing it up to be sowed with salt and brimstone, and all this chargeable culture and discipline cast away upon them utterly, mortifying—instead of sins and impieties—nothing but the relics of piety, and civility, and ingenuous nature; a strange pestilential fever, seizing upon their very spirits and souls; and now nothing but a Roman eagle or

SERM. X.

a hell, a Titus or a fiend left behind to work any reformation on them. Thus all God's thunderbolts being exhausted, His methods of discipline posed, and non-plused, and frustrated, there is nothing behind but calling in and retracting those rods, the no longer vouchsafing those thunderbolts, a news that perhaps you would be glad to hear of, a respite of punishments, but that the most ominous direful of all others, the most formidable of all God's denouncings, the last and worst kind of desertion, "Why should you be," not embraced and dandled, but "scourged and smitten any more? You will revolt more and more."

These words will afford you these four fields of plain and useful meditation:

1. God's custom of striking sinners, and increasing stripes on them, in order to their reformation.

2. The prime proper seasons for such striking: 1. in case of revolt: 2. in case of revolting more.

3. The one only case in which striking becomes uncharitable, when the more and the more God smites, the more and the more the sinner revolts.

4. And lastly, the pitiful estate of the sinner when he comes to this, when in this case God removes smiting, for though it be an act of mercy in God, yet it is that which bodes very ill, it is an indication of the most desperate estate of the patient; "Why should you be stricken any more?"

I begin first with the first,—which lies not so visible and distinguishable in the text, but is the foundation that is supposed under it, and on which all that is visible is superstructed,—and that is, God's pious and charitable design in smiting sinners, and increasing stripes on them; though now, on more prudential considerations, they shall not be any more smitten.

[Ps. lxxxix. 30, 32.] "If My children forsake My law, &c., I will visit their offences with the rod, and their sins with scourges," saith God by the Psalmist. God hath His visits for distempered children, not only like that of St. Paul's, "in the spirit of meekness," but also ἐν ῥάβδῳ, "with the rod;" and if that single engine of discipline will not do it, there are sharper and more behind, the *flagella*, or "scourges," in the plural.

[1 Cor. iv. 21.]

And this by the way of prudent medicinal process, of solemn deliberate dispensation, according to rules of art: you will presently discern it, if you but look into the nature, and causes, and process of the disease. I shall give you but one way of judging of these, by remembering you that all sin is founded in *bono jucundo*, in the pleasing or delighting of the carnal faculty: "every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed," when his carnal pleasurable faculty, ἐξέλκει καὶ δελεάζει, draws him out of his road of piety by an amiable pleasurable lure or bait. Of this kind, if you will look into the retail, you shall find every sin in the world to be,—some law of the members, some dictate of the flesh, which is all for sensitive pleasure, a warring, a contending, arguing and pleading before the will against the adversary law of the mind, against the dictates of the honest or virtuous, of the rational or Christian, which is a pretending and contending on the other side. Three representations there were of the apple in the first sin, and every of those under this notion of pleasure. The woman saw, 1. "that it was good for food," pleasurable to the taste: 2. "a desire," (as it is in the Hebrew,) [which we render again "pleasant to the eyes:" and 3. "that it was to be desired to make one wise;" i. e., according to the same Hebrew notion, pleasurable in this, that it would make them know more than they did before, a kind of satisfaction, and so pleasure to the understanding, as you know knowledge, though it be but of trifles and news, is a most pleasurable thing. And so generally, every sin is begotten after the image and likeness of that first; the pleasures of lust, the pleasures of revenge, that huge high epicurism; the pleasures of pride, the greatest that Aristotle, or the author περὶ κόσμου, conceived that the old heathen gods could pretend to in their recesses[a], their not vouchsafing to see or hear any thing but by perspectives and otacoustics; or again, the pleasures of heresy, of schism, which he that is guilty of, saith the Apostle, "is he not carnal?" the pleasures of singularity, and being head of a faction, they say the hugest sensuality and voluptuousness, the most

[Jas. i. 14.]

[1 Cor. iii. 3.]

[a] [Aristot. De Mundo, vi. 9. Hammond has misapprehended the meaning of the passage, which is a description of the palace of Ecbatana, where there were buildings so constructed with guards called ὠτάκουσται, ὡς ἂν ὁ βασιλεὺς αὐτὸς δεσπότης καὶ θεὸς ὀνομαζόμενος πάντα μὲν βλέποι, πάντα δ' ἀκούοι.]

SERM. X.

bewitching ravishment of any; and even covetousness and ambition, the sins which seem to be particularly fastened on two other notions of the forbidden fruit, the profit and honour, the wealth and greatness, the baits of the world, and not of the flesh,—and may have smitings of God proportioned to them on our estates and honours, as well as on our flesh,—yet, I say, even these would certainly never be able to work upon us, if there were not a notion of pleasure in them; and therefore one of them is called "the lust of the eye," and the worldly pomp and greatness the object of the other—as that in Moses, of the "honour of being called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,"—is distinctly styled the "pleasures of sin," in the plural. And indeed the matter is clear and demonstrable, there being but two contrary faculties about us, the rational and the carnal principle, the inward and the outward man, as every virtuous and Christian thought and action is a *συνήδεσθαι τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ*, a "complacency" and delight of the upper nobler spiritual faculty in the law of God, the object apportioned to that; so is every sin that is ever committed, a *συνήδεσθαι τῷ νόμῳ* [*ἐν τοῖς*] *μέλεσι*, a "complacency," or conjunction in liking, a being pleased with the law of the members, a choosing of that which may be most agreeable and proportionable to the designs of the flesh, i.e., most desirable and pleasurable to that.

Heb. xi. 25.

Rom. vii. 22.

Having given you the character of the disease, the distinct nature of sin, the propriety of the distemper, that some either true or false sensual pleasure, something that is really delectable to the flesh, or that either by a false glass of passion or custom, or else by an imperfect half light, appears to be pleasurable, is the foundation and matter of every sin, (never any revolts from God but when we hope to enjoy ourselves better in some other company, some revenue or income of *ἀπόλαυσις*, or "joy" to the flesh expected, and aimed at in every extravagance or out-lying,) you cannot now choose but acknowledge the propriety of the physic which we have here before us, the usefulness of the strokes, or smitings, for this recovery. When a man is in the pursuit of a mere pleasurable object, which he confesses to value for nothing else but that it is sweet to taste, could he but discern or espy the whole sweetness and pleasurableness of it

secretly let out, or spilt upon the ground, or evaporate before his eyes, or but a scourge held over his head, or a vial of gall or wormwood imbibed, that for every dram of pleasure shall give him a terrible proportion of bitterness at the present, of instant pain and smart: it is not imaginable that any man in his senses should advance one step further in this pursuit; the more sensual and carnal man he is, the more he must abhor such marches as these, which are so treacherous and malicious to the very flesh; he that can satisfy himself with the empty name of sin, though it taste never so sour or loathsome; that will not in this case compromise and compound with innocence, take purity on Christ's terms, rather than venture on present racks and torments, had need be a sublime, aërial, spiritual sinner indeed; like Lucifer himself, who, we know, is all spirit, he must have nothing left of sense or flesh about him. Were but the thousandth part of that hell which expects the indulgent sinner in another world mixed in the very cup of his pleasurablest sin here, the least present whip, instead of all those future scorpions, it would be almost impossible for the most magnanimous sinner to venture so deep for that empty honour, the bare opinion, or fancy, or credit of having assaulted and rebelled against heaven and gained nothing by it; to pay so dear for that "which is not bread," hath nothing of substance or satisfaction in it. And therefore this is the design of God's rod, His smitings, His punishments, to give us a little of that hell beforehand,—which our infidel senses apprehend nothing of as long as it is future,—to help us to some disrelish to sin at the present, to give us some part of its portion, of the odiousness and bitterness of it, in the very mouth, that we may not have any joy in chewing or swallowing down so abhorred a mixture, which hath such a certain arrear of horror and bitterness in the stomach; to rain down some fire and brimstone into our throats whensoever we are gaping after that forbidden tree; thus to discourage, if not to allay our hydropic thirst, to encumber and trash us in our violent furious marches, to pluck off the wheels of our Egyptian chariots that they may drive more heavily; that finding the most pleasurable sin such a sad γλυκύπικρον, a compost of more bitter than sweet at the very instant, we should

[Is. lv. 2.]

[Exod. xiv. 25.]

SERM. X.

never be such blind obedient votaries of Satan, never so perfectly renounce and deny ourselves, our own ease, our own all kind of interests and advantages, never be such professed enemies and tyrants against our own flesh, as to go on in such chargeable ways of sin, when we see and feel so sadly, how without and before the certain cures of a chilled old age, by this charitable anticipation of God's smiting hand, the days are come upon sin, that we can truly say "that we have no pleasure in it." And so you see the grounds of this medicinal method, the charity and piety of God's design in smiting, my first observable. I proceed briefly to the prime, proper seasons of this charity, this smiting: 1. in case of revolt, 2. of revolting more; my second particular.

[Eccles. xii. 1.]

God's first season of punishing is instantly upon revolt, at the first breaking off, or aversion, or departure from God; and sure he that is not suffered by God to enjoy one easy or comfortable hour in sin, that is presently called to discipline, taught what a jealous God he hath provoked, that is roused and awaked at the first nod, watched over by the most vigilant monitor,—that he cannot move out of his posture of piety, but presently God in heaven is a calling out to him, to reduce him to his rank again,—cannot choose but acknowledge himself a prime part of God's care and solicitude. The first day of going out into the field, as in God's, so in Satan's service, is generally a nice and a critical day; according to the successes or discouragements we meet with then, we have more or less mind to the trade for ever after; should but our beginnings of revolt from God, our first treacherous intentions against Him, prove lucky, and smooth, and prosperous, it were easy and prone, and not at all improbable, for us to glide insensibly into all rebellions and impieties, to swear fealty to Satan, that hath entertained us so hospitably, and suddenly to engage so deep under his colours, that there would be no retiring with honour, no returning to God without being infamous, without undergoing the brand of apostates from Satan, of a kind of *fœdifragi*, covenant-breakers and deserters; our repentance would go for the more scandalous thing, our reduction to our allegiance to heaven would be the forfeiting of a trust, and within a while appear the more ill-favoured reproachful revolt of the two.

SERM. X.

Whereas if we meet with some checks and discouragements betimes, some rousing brushes at the first entrance into the service, it is possible we may discern our error, especially if it were the flesh that helped to seduce us, if the hope of advantage that brought us into it, "because the wicked goes unpunished, therefore the heart of man is wholly set to do evil," saith Solomon; and therefore that God may not be thought to desert them presently at the first revolt, to deliver up that heart of theirs to that hell upon earth upon this first single provocation, God is concerned "in faithfulness to cause them to be troubled," not to lead them into this temptation, to profane continuance in sin, but to give them this grace, this gift of punishment, to reduce and recall them presently as soon as they are revolted, to let Satan or his instruments loose, to disease and awake this drowsy servant of his, who therefore to such purposes, though he be cast out of heaven, from being God's menial servant, is still ὑπηρέτης θεοῦ, God's officer and minister, retains so much of his old angelical title of being a ministering spirit, and that, if we be not wanting to ourselves, to the greatest advantage of our souls, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν, not εἰς φθορὰν, a piece of edifying, not sanguinary discipline. And let me tell you my opinion, that for that which is called punitive justice, severity or revenge on sin, that part of the magistrate's office among men, to be ἔκδικος εἰς ὀργὴν, "an avenger for wrath," were it not in mere necessary charity to them that are punished, or to them that are warned by others' punishment, there were no reason for any man to inflict it upon another, it were wholly to be left to God's tribunal.

[Eccles. viii. 11.]

[Ps. cxix. 75.]

[Rom. xiii. 4. διάκονος.]

[2 Cor. xiii. 10. καθαίρεσιν.]

[Rom. xiii. 4.]

From this hint two things I desire to commend to my auditory, by way of application.

1. The care that they are to have, to take special notice of every the softest degree of smiting that ever befalls them in their lives; be it a sickness, or a miscarriage, a thousand to one it is an application of God's to some special distemper of thine, to some degree of revolt from Him. This I will not say is perpetually true, because I know there be other uses of smitings, for the exercise of many Christian virtues,—which would rust and sully and come to little, and so Christ lose all the glory and renown, and we all the reward of them, if

SERM. X.

we had not such occasions to exercise them,—but I say the odds is so great, when the rod of God comes, that it comes for some such revolt of thine, that certainly it is thy duty so far to distrust thine own excellencies, as to doubt that it comes not to thee merely as to an *athleta*, or combatant, or perfect Christian, *πρὸς δοκιμασίαν*, "by way of trial" only, but as to one guilty of some kind of revolt, and so *εἰς κόλασιν*, for punishment and reformation. And though I cannot be confident it is so, yet believe me, thou hast so much reason to suspect thyself, that it will be worth thy pains to examine, upon every stroke on thy body, thy estate, nay on thy reputation, every cursing of a Shimei, every approach or terror, brandishing the rod or sword against thee, that it is some present sin of thine, some degree of instant revolt that hath brought this stroke upon thee. *Εἴ τις ἀσθενεῖ*, saith St. James, "if any man be sick," &c. The whole text supposeth it strongly probable that he that is thus visited hath committed some act of revolt, either of greater or lesser moment, either against God or his brother, to which that sickness hath some relation; and there is a notable place, Ecclesiasticus xviii. 21, "Humble thyself before thou be sick, and in the time of sins shew repentance," supposing the time of sins to be the forerunner of sickness, and he that would but thus examine himself, whensoever he hath any such bitter potion sent him from God, ask his own conscience, his best adviser, the question, to what former disease it is to which God, *ὡς ἰατρὸς*, not as an enemy, but a physician, hath accommodated this application, he might perhaps forty years hence thank me for this admonition, and be able to tell me that from this day to that he hath experimented the truth of the observation, never received a corrosive plaster from God, but upon enquiry he found a piece of dead flesh in himself to which it clearly belonged. I doubt not but a few good memories might presently bring me in a catalogue of proofs to my observation; I desire you will be your own confessors, and do it to yourselves; and then do the duty that in such case belongs to you. And that is, in the second place, not only to acknowledge the disease before God most freely, and apply His physic and our diligence to the cure of it, but withal to look upon these strokes as the sovereignest mercies,

[2Sam.xvi. 5, &c.]

[Jas. v.14.]

so many beams of mere grace, sermons from heaven, the very "Bath Col," the voice from heaven of old, that seldom came but with a clap of thunder along with it, methods of God's restraining and exciting Spirit; and thank God as heartily for them as for the richest boons, the warmest sunshines that you ever received from the Sun of righteousness, and being once "made whole," rescued, upon thy return, from one such first smiting, it concerns thee nearly for ever after, to "go, sin no more, lest a far worse thing happen unto thee." [John v. 14.]

For so I told you, there is a second season of smiting, and that of doubling the blows; viz., upon our revolting more. God doth not presently upon the first recidivation or relapse, give up the sinner for desperate; He concludes indeed most justly and deliberately, that the *κακοχυμία*, or disaffection, is the stronger when it breaks forth again; the leprosy more dangerous that it spreads in the flesh after it hath been looked on by the priest; that the former physic, if it were sufficient to set him on his legs again, was not yet able to make him a hale, sound man; some venomous humour was left behind, and in all probability a stronger physic is now necessary, perhaps a whole course of steel: a physic, God knows, that this kingdom hath been under five or six years; I would I could say the patient prospered under it; nay, that it had not grown far worse, gone backward in all auspicious symptoms ever since, as if that steel, not sufficiently prepared, were turned into the habit of the body, and now wanted some higher chemical preparations to work it out again. If this be the case, as God knows it is too suspicious it is, I am then fallen on my third general, the only case wherein this sharp physic becomes unseasonable, when the more and the more God strikes, the more and more the sinner revolts, and to that I must now hasten. "Why," &c. [Lev. xiii. 5, &c.]

A nice subtle question and dispute there hath been among divines, which may in part have its decision from hence, concerning a peculiar middle third kind of knowledge in God, as whether, on supposition that such a thing should come to pass, which never shall, God knows what will follow by way of consequence. To this purpose many notable passages of

SERM. X.

Scripture there are: the oracle that David received about the men of Keilah, the assurance that they would deliver him up if he entrusted himself to them; though the truth is he never made the trial of their sincerity, but believed God the searcher of their hearts, without that more costly experiment. So when Christ affirms of Tyre and Sidon, that if the miracles done in Bethsaida, had been done among them, they had infallibly repented. And so St. Paul, in his voyage by sea, that told the mariners how certainly they should be cast away if any went out of the ship, though they neither went out nor lost one life. And so here, where God by the prophet foretells that in case He now should "smite them any more, they would revolt more and more," and therefore resolves to give over smiting. To enter into any part of that subtle debate is not my design, as remembering that of Gregory Nazianzen that the Ammonites and the Moabites were not permitted to enter into the Church of God; i. e., saith he[b], διαλεκτικοὶ, καὶ κακοπράγμονες λόγοι, "curious and subtle discourses," which are not very apt to minister grace or edification to the hearers. The utmost that will be of use or profit to us, is to observe this positive aphorism of God's methods of discipline, of His gracious economies; seldom or never to send punishments on any, but when they are probable to do some good, to work reformations on them. Two cases there are in physic, when the physician in all reason withdraws his hand and his drugs, 1. when the patient is desperate, and the physic of a high nature; for then such costly drugs should neither be poured out nor defamed, neither lose their virtue nor adventure their reputation on the desperate patient; as long as there is hope they must be plied, be it never so chargeable or painful, even to cupping and scarifying, even "skin after skin,"—as those words in Job would be rendered, those things that are nearest to us one after another,—"and all that he hath will he give for his life:" and when there is no hope, some easy physic, some indifferent, tame cordials may be allowed till the last gasp, but the nobler drugs must not be thus riotously dealt with; and so in like manner to the desperate revolter; the sun may shine, and the rain may fall on him, as well as on

[1 Sam. xxiii. 11.]

[Matt. xi. 21.]

[Acts xxvii. 31; see v. 22.]

[Job ii. 4.]

[b] [S. Greg. Naz., Orat. xlii. § 18. Op., tom. i. p. 760, C.]

the most hopeful; some indifferent ordinary ways of cure, such are prosperity, affluence of fortune, and the like, but for the magistrals of nature and art—such are God's smitings and punishments, which cost God dear, as it were; He is fain to fetch them from far, to go out of His place for them, in the prophets' style—God will not be so prodigal of these, but when there is hope that they may prove successful. [Is. xxvi. 21; Jer. iv. 7; Micah i. 3.]

And so again, secondly, when the condition is more hopeful, yet in case the kind of physic is become too familiar with the body, when it ceases to be physic and proves diet, turns into nourishment and increase of the disease, it is then more than time to change the bills, to set the patient to some new course; and this is the case in the text again; and I heartily wish to God it were not the very case of the kingdom; I will not say it is a desperate patient, that no method of God's could possibly work good on us,—no, I will hope and pray yet against our wickedness, and do it on this very score; for although some part of the nation have had, for a long time, little of this bitter physic administered to them by God; yet sure some of us are still under this cure of the rod, have not all our caustic plasters torn off from us, from whence I think I may conclude that God is still a wrestling with our disease, hath not yet given us quite over unto death,—but this I am afraid I may too truly say, that of those that are still under this sharp and sovereign course of physic, this of punishments, it is become too familiar with most of us; we look not on our afflictions as on medicines sent us immediately out of the special dispensatory of heaven, but as the ordinary diet and portion of mortal mutable men; I wish I could not add that our malady hath most highly thrived and prospered under our physic, more new kinds and varieties of sinning, from all the nations about us, nay from hell itself, taken in, incorporate and naturalized among us, in a few years of God's sword being drawn, His thunderbolts scattered among us, a greater progress towards atheism made generally in this nation under this preaching of the rod, than in many ages before had been observable among us; let it be considered with some sadness, and it will certainly appear to the eternal shame of a provoking people, that to every degree of oppression and injustice that [Ps. cxli. 6.]

SERM. X.

this nation was formerly guilty of, the thousand-fold were now a very moderate proportion; to every oath that was formerly darted against heaven, there are now whole volleys of perjuries; never did so coarse and sturdy, so plain and boisterous a sin, so perfect a camel go down so glib, and go over so easily. To omit that prodigy of lying and slandering,—a vapour that comes visibly out of hell, as soon as it was there resolved that innocence must suffer,—some sins as wasting as any in the whole inventory have of late grown so frequent and fashionable in the world, that they have quite put off the nature of sin by being our daily food, digested and converted into other shapes; as if swallowed by a pious man,—who, God knows, must answer the dearest for his revolts,—they should turn into his substance, become acts of piety of the highest size; one such metamorphosed, transfigured sin is become able to commute and expiate for a hundred more, that have not had the luck of that disguise: and in a word, our revolts are so prodigiously increased, improved into such a mountainous vastness, such a colony of none but giantly shapes, that though I cannot undertake to foretell our fate, or affirm that we are those very men come to that very crisis, upon which God by the purport of the doom in my text will soon give over smiting any more,—which perhaps some might be so mad as to think a happy news, if they could but hear of it, and would be content to venture any hazard that this could bring on them,—yet this I shall from hence be able to pronounce dogmatically, that should such a fate befall us, either the nation in general or any of us in particular, should there be a respite of the rod, before any laying down of the sins that called for it, a cessation of arms betwixt heaven and earth, before a cessation of hostilities between earth and heaven, this were, as the last, so the worst of evils, a calm to be dreaded beyond all the loudest tempests, which will be the better evidenced and demonstrated to you, if we proceed to the fourth and last particular, the pitiful estate of the sinner, when in this case God removes smiting. "Why," &c.

To discern the sadness, and deplorableness of this estate, I shall need give you no sharper character of it than only this, that it is a condition that forceth God to forsake us in

mere mercy, to give over all thoughts of kindness to us, and that the only degree of kindness left whereof we are capable. In plain terms, to that man or people that is the worse for stripes, these two most unreconcileable contraries are most sadly true:

(1.) The removing of these stripes is the greatest judgment imaginable.

And yet (2.) secondly, the greatest judgment is the only remaining mercy also.

Consider these two apart, you will see the truth of them.

1. The removing the physic before it hath done the work is the greatest judgment, even subtraction of all grace, downright desertion, and nothing more fatal than that to him that cannot recover, or repent himself, without the assistance of that physic; strokes are not sent by God but as a last and necessary reserve, when a long peace and prosperity have been tried, and not been able to make any impression on sin; nay, perhaps, have gone over to the enemies' side, taken part with sin, proved its prime friend, furnished it with weapons and ammunition, enabled it to riot, and grow luxurious, and to think of being final conqueror over the Spirit of God, which had it been kept low it could not have done; and in this case the weight and fortune of the whole battle lies on stripes, and if those be commanded away by God, if called upon a first or second repulse, if all God's thunderbolts, the only remaining hope, have the retreat sounded to them, what a destitute, routed, forlorn estate is the soul then left in! Had sin been wounded or worsted in the fight, brought to some visible declination, yet this withdrawing of those forces that gave this lusty assault would presently restore it to some heart and courage again, would give it space to rally and recover strength; and so oft it falls out, that when afflictions have done their work, mortified our excesses, and so march home again to God, in triumph over the enemy, yet within a while, after the smart is forgotten, the very vanquished lust returns, and gets strength again, and, as it is oft in Thucydides' story[c], by that time the trophies are set up, the baffled enemy regains the field and victory. But when on the other side sin, after the combat with

[c] [e. g. lib. i. 105.]

SERM. X.

God's rod, comes off unwounded and hale, and the bruised and battered rod is seen to have retired also, then this is the greatest fleshing of sin imaginable, a perfect bloodless victory over grace, over God's merciful Spirit striving with us; and nothing but haughtiness, and triumph, and obduration is to be looked for after such successes. And this is that sad state of desertion I told you of, a leaving the poor soul, like him that had fallen among thieves, "wounded and half dead;" and not so much as one good Samaritan near to bind up, or pour in the least drop of oil into the wounds; for it is not imaginable that ease, or peace—so calm, so soft, so pusillanimous a creature as affluence or prosperity is—should ever come in to the rescue, should do such valiant acts, when so much stouter, sterner instruments have been so utterly repulsed. And yet in this sad case, the matter is not yet at the highest, but—which was the second part of the true but doleful paradox—this very desertion is the only tolerable mercy now behind. Should God continue stripes, and they still make the sinner more atheistical, this, I say, would but increase the load in hell; every improsperous stroke on the steeled anvil heart will but add to the tale of oppositions and affronts, and resistances, and so to the catalogue of guilts and woes, that sad arrear which another world will see paid distinctly; and so the calling off, or intercepting of these strokes, i. e., these our unhappy advantages and opportunities of enhancing our score, or reckoning, is a kind of mercy still, though but a pitiful one; and if God do not think fit to afford us this mercy, if God do not give over smiting in this case, this is then His greater severity yet.

[Luke x. 30.]

And so I conceive the impenitent's state brought to an extraordinary issue, that whatsoever God deal out to us, the consequent is of a nature most exquisitely miserable. If He take off His punishments we are in a desperate estate, there is nothing left in any degree probable to do any good on us; and if He do not take them off they do but accumulate and heighten our future torments; the mercy is a cruel mercy, and the severity a cruel severity; the first leaves us in a palsy or lethargy, a dead, stupid, mortified state, and the second increases the fever, adds fuel to the flames. If He strike not, we lie dead in sin, as so many trunks and car-

cases before Him; if He strike on, He awakes us into oaths and blasphemies, and so still more direful provocations.

And so, as we are wont to say of an erroneous conscience, in case the commands are lawful which that thinks unlawful, it sins which way soever it moves, by disobedience against the duty of the fifth commandment, and by obedience, against the dictate of conscience; a sad exigence, no way in the world to be avoided, but by getting out of the prime fundamental infelicity, getting the erroneous conscience informed and rectified. So is it, in a manner, with God towards this unhappy creature of His, that hath not, nor is like to edify under stripes, He wounds it mortally, whatsoever He designeth toward it; His desertion is cruel, and His not deserting is cruel too. Lay but the scene of this kingdom at this time,—of which I may say it is a stubborn unnurtured scholar of God's, a very ill proficient under stripes, far worse, and more hopeless now than when first it came under this discipline,—and I shall challenge the prudentest diviner under heaven to tell me rationally what it were but tolerably charitable to wish or pray for it, in respect of the removal of God's judgments. Should we be respited before we be in any degree reformed, thrust out of God's school now we are at the wildest? This were a woeful change, removing of Canaanites, and delivering us up to the beasts of the field, breaking down the inclosure and letting us into the wilderness, rescuing us out of purgatory and casting us into hell; and never any *orate pro anima*, prayer for deliverance out of those poetic flames, was so impious, so unkind as this. And whilst I have this prospect before me, methinks I am obliged in very charity to pray, "Lord keep us in this limbo still, these but transitory afflictions of this life, which in comparison with spiritual desertion, or delivering up to ourselves, is a very cheerful and comfortable condition." And yet should God thus hearken to that prayer, continue us under this discipline longer, provide a new stock of artillery, and empty another heaven, another magazine and armoury upon us, and all prove but *bruta fulmina* still, another seven years of judgments thrive no better with us than the last sad apprenticeship hath done: O what an enhancement would this

SERM. X.

be of our reckoning! What a sad score of aggravations,—that is, of so many mercies and graces, so many wrestlings of His Spirit with sin, all grieved and repelled by us,—and consequently what a pile of guilts toward the accumulating of our flames. What is the natural and the only *salvo* to this intricacy, I suppose it is prone to any man to divine; why, to reform the fundamental error, which can no otherwise be repaired after; to begin, if it be but now, to edify, and to be the better for stripes; to set every man to this one late, but necessary resolution, and not to be content to have done somewhat at home in private, every man in mending one, as they say,—though if that were done uniformly it would serve the turn,—but every man, "whose heart the Lord hath stricken" to be a convert-humble-mourner for the iniquity of his people, for the provocations of this Church and kingdom, and for the "plague of his own heart,"—to go out, and call all the idle by-standers in the field, to draw as many more as it is possible into that engagement, and in this sense to bring into the service a whole army of covenanters and reformers, every man vowing hostility against those wasting sins of his that have thus long kept a tortured, broken kingdom and Church upon the wheel, which can never get off, till we come whole shoals of suppliants and auxiliaries to its rescue; nay, till the sins that first brought it to this execution become the ἀντίψυχοι, be delivered up cheerfully to suffer in the stead. That this work be at length begun in some earnest, you will surely give God and His angels, and your friends leave to expect with some impatience; and it were even pity they should any longer be frustrated. If they may at last be so favoured by us, our state will be as great a riddle of mercy and of bliss as it was even now of sadness and horror. Let God do what He please to us for the turning or for the continuing our captivity, it will be matter of infinite advantage and joy to us. If He continue us still upon the cross, after the *consummatum est*, after the work is done, after it is a reformed, purified nation, O that is a super-angelical state, a laying a foundation in that deep, for the higher and more glorious superstructure of joy and bliss in another world; nay, if He should sweep us away in one *akeldama*, this were to the true penitent but the richer

[1 Kings viii. 38.]

boon, a transplantation only, a sending us out a triumphant, not captive colony to heaven. Or if we be then taken down from the cross, and put into the quiet chambers or dormitories, if there be seasons of rest and peace yet behind upon this earth in these our days, O they will be rich seasons of opportunity to bring forth glorious proportionable fruits of such repentance, a whole harvest of affiance and faithful dependance upon heaven, a daily continual growth in grace, in all that is truly Christian; in a word, of rendering us a kingdom of angelical Christians here, and of saints hereafter; which, whether it be by the way of the wilderness, or of the Red sea, by all the sufferings that a villainous world can design, or a gracious Father permit and convert to our greatest good, God of His infinite mercy grant us all, even for His Son Jesus Christ His sake, to whom with the Father, &c.

SOME

PROFITABLE DIRECTIONS

BOTH

FOR PRIEST AND PEOPLE,

IN

TWO SERMONS,

PREACHED BEFORE THESE EVIL TIMES:

THE ONE TO THE CLERGY,

THE OTHER TO THE CITIZENS OF LONDON.

BY

HENRY HAMMOND, D.D.

These two following Sermons were subjoined by the Author to the review of his Annotations on the New Testament, published 1657, with this Advertisement.

TO THE READER.

My fear that these additional notes may fall into some hands, which for want of sufficient acquaintance with the larger volume, may miss receiving the desired fruit from them, hath suggested the affixing this Auctarium of two plain, intelligible discourses; the one prepared for an auditory of the clergy, the other of citizens or laity, and so containing somewhat of useful advice for either sort of readers, to whose hands this volume shall come. That it may be to both proportionably profitable, shall be the prayer of

Your Servant in the Lord,

H. HAMMOND.

SERMON XI.

A SERMON PREACHED TO THE CLERGY OF THE DEANERY OF SHORHAM IN KENT, AT THE VISITATION BETWEEN EASTER AND WHITSUNTIDE, A.D. 1639, HELD AT ST. MARY-CRAY.

THE PASTOR'S MOTTO.

2 Cor. xii. 14.

For I seek not yours, but you.

This text hath somewhat in it seasonable both for the assembly and the times I speak in; for the first, it is the word or motto of an Apostle, *non vestra sed vos*, "not yours but you," transmitted to us with his apostleship, to be transcribed not into our rings or seals of orders, but our hearts, there, if you please, to be engraven with a diamond, set as the stones in our ephod, the jewels in our breast-plate, gloriously legible to all that behold us. And for the second, consider but the occasion that extorted from our humble saint this so magnificent elogy of himself; you shall find it that which is no small part of the infelicity of his successors at this time, the contempt and vileness of his ministry, a sad joyless subject of an epistle, which would have been all spent in superstruction of heavenly doctrine upon that precious foundation formerly laid, in dressing of those noble plants, that generous vine, that had cost him so much care to plant, Is. v. [2.] but is fain to divert from that to a comfortless *πάρεργον*, a parenthesis of two or three chapters long, to vindicate himself from present danger of being despised, and that even by his own children, whom he had begotten in the Gospel, but other *pseudos*, made up all of lying and depraving, had debauched out of all respect to his doctrine, or estimation to his person. I should have given a St. Paul leave to have hoped

SERM. XI.

for better returns from his Corinthians, and now he finds it otherwise, to have expressed that sense in a sharper strain of passion and indignation than Tully could do against Antony[a], when on the same exacerbation he brake out into that stout piece of eloquence, *Quid putem? contemptumne me? non video quid sit in moribus aut vita mea, quod despicere possit Antonius.* But there was another consideration, which, as it composes our Apostle's style, so it enlarges it with arguments, all that he can invent to ingratiate himself unto them, because this contempt of their Apostle was a most heinous, provoking sin, and withal that which was sure to make his apostleship successless among them. And then, though he can contemn reputation, respect, any thing that is his own, yet he cannot the *quæro vos,* "seeking of them," that office that is intrusted him by Christ, of bringing Corinthians to heaven. Though he can absolutely expose his credit to all the eagles and vultures on the mountains, yet can he not so harden his bowels against his converts, their pining, gasping souls, as to see them with patience posting down this precipice; by despising of him, prostituting their own salvation. And therefore in this ecstatic fit of love and jealousy in the beginning of chap. xi. you may see him resolve to do that that was most contrary to his disposition, boast, and vaunt, and play the fool, give them the whole tragedy of his love, what he had done and suffered for them, by this means to raise them out of that pit, force them out of that hell, that the contempt of his ministry had almost engulphed them in. And among the many topics that he had provided to this purpose, this is one he thought most fit to insist on, his no design on any thing of theirs, but only their souls; their wealth was petty inconsiderable pillage and spoil for an Apostle in his warfare; too poor, inferior gain for him to stoop to; a flock, an army, a whole Church full of ransomed souls, fetched out of the jaws of the lion and the bear, was the only honourable reward for him to pitch design on, *non quæro vestra sed vos,* "I seek not yours, but you."

[1 Sam. xvii. 34.]

In handling which words, should I allow myself licence to

[a] [Quod putem? contemtumne me? non video nec in vita, nec in gratia, nec in rebus gestis nec in hac mea mediocritate ingenii quid despicere possit Antonius. Cic. Orat. Phil. ii. 1.]

observe and mention to you the many changes that are rung upon them in the world, my sermon would turn all into satire, my discourse divide itself not into so many parts, but into so many declamations: 1. against them that are neither for the *vos* nor *vestra*, the "you," nor "yours;" 2. those that are for the *vestra*, but not *vos*, the "yours" but "not you;" 3. those that are for the *vos*, "you," but in subordination to the *vestra*, "yours," and at last perhaps meet with a handful of gleanings of pastors that are either for the *vestra*, "yours," in subordination to the *vos*, "you;" or the *vos*, "you," but not *vestra*, "yours." Instead of this looser variety I shall set my discourse these strict limits, which will be just the doctrine and use of this text; 1. consider the τὸ ῥητὸν, the truth of the words in St. Paul's practice; 2. the τὸ λογικὸν, the end for which they are here mentioned by him; 3. the τὸ ἠθικὸν, how far that practice and that end will be imitable to us that here are now assembled; and then I shall have no more to tempt or importune your patience. SERM. XI.

First of the first, St. Paul's practice in seeking of the *vos*, "you." That his earnest pursuit of the good of his auditors' souls, though it have one very competent testimony from this place, ἥδιστα δαπανήσω καὶ ἐκδαπανηθήσομαι ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν, "most willingly will I spend and be spent for your souls," even sacrifice my soul for the saving of yours, yet many other places there are which are as punctual and exact for that as this in this text; nay, it is but a ζητῶ, "seek," here, but you shall find it an ἀγωνίζομαι, "contend," in many other places; all the agonistical phrases in use among the ancient Grecians culled out and scattered among his epistles, fetched from Olympus to Sion, from Athens to Jerusalem, and all little enough to express the earnest holy violence of his soul in this καλὸς ἀγὼν, "good fight;" as he calls his ministry, running and wrestling with all the difficulties in the world, and no βραβεῖον or ἆθλον, "price" or "reward" of all that industry and that patience, but only the ὑμᾶς, "you," gaining so many colonies to heaven. But then for the *non vestra*, "not yours," his absolute disclaiming of all pay for this his service; this text and the verses about it are more punctual than any that are to be met with. In other places he can think fit the soldier, i. e. minister, "should not war

ver. 15.

[1 Cor. ix. 25; Phil. i. 30; Col. ii. 1; 1 Thess. ii. 2; Heb. xii. 4.]

[1 Tim. vi. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 7.]

[1 Cor. ix. 7, 9; 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.]

SERM. XI.

at his own charges," that the "ox's mouth should not be muzzled," and that the "labourer should be thought worthy of his reward," and a "double honour for some of those labourers," the *πρωτοτόκια*, "elder brother's portion," the privilege of primogeniture for some, and that consisting not only in a *προστασία*, "precedence," but *διπλῆ τιμὴ*, "double honour," and that of maintenance too, as well as dignity. But in this chapter to these Corinthians the Apostle renounces receiving, or looking after any such revenue, or encouragement to his apostleship; what he saith here *οὐ ζητῶ*, "I seek not," for the present, he specifies both for time past and to come, *οὐ κατενάρκησα*, "I have not," and *οὐ καταναρκήσω*, "I will not;" i. e., saith Hesychius[b], that best understood the Hellenists' dialect, *κατενάρκησα, ἐβάρυνα*, it signifies to lay burdens on others, and the Apostle in that very word *οὐ κατεβάρησα ὑμᾶς*, "I have not laid weights on you;" and yet further, *οὐκ ἐπλεονέκτησα*[c], "I have not coveted," all to this same purpose, that St. Paul, on some special considerations, would never finger one penny of the Corinthians' wealth, but still used some other means to sustain himself, that he might be sure not to be burdensome to them. What these means were will not be easy to say exactly, yet I think one may collect them to be one or more of these three: 1. "Labouring with his own hands," earning his maintenance on the week-days by his trade of making tents, as we read, and that particularly at Corinth; 2. receiving pensions of other Churches, which furnished him with a subsistence, though he had none from Corinth; and that is more than a conjecture, he mentions it himself, and calls it the "robbing of other Churches, taking wages of them to do your service;" and perhaps, 3. being relieved by some Christians that accompanied and ministered to his necessities; for that was the practice of other Apostles, whatever it was of St. Paul; and that I conceive the meaning of that mistaken phrase, "Have we not power," *ἀδελφὴν γυναῖκα περιάγειν*, "to carry about a believing or a sister woman," or matron, (for so *ἀδελφὸς*, "a brother," is every where a believer, and *ἀδελφὴ*, "sister," is but the varying the gender or sex,) as many others did, to

[Heb. xii. 16.]

1Tim.v.17.

ver. 13.

ver. 14.

ver. 16.

ver. 17.

Acts xviii. 3.

ver. 1.

[2 Cor. xi. 8.]

1 Cor.ix.5.

[b] [Hesych. Lex. in verb. p. 508.]

[c] [*μή τινα ὧν ἀπέσταλκα πρὸς ὑμᾶς, δι' αὐτοῦ ἐπλεονέκτησα ὑμᾶς;*]

maintain and defray the charge of their journey, that so they might μὴ ἐργάζεσθαι, "forbear working, and yet eat and drink," not starve themselves by preaching the Gospel. Such an one was Phœbe, who therefore is called διάκονος, "a servant of the Church of Cenchrea," i. e., one that out of "her wealth," διηκόνει, "ministered to the Apostles," and sustained them, and particularly St. Paul at Corinth, as will appear if you put together that second verse of Rom. xvi. and the date or subscription in the conclusion of the epistle. In ver. 2. she is called προστάτις πολλῶν καὶ αὐτοῦ ἐμοῦ, προστάτις, i. e., πρόξενος, "entertainer" and "succourer of many," and of St. Paul himself, and this it seems at Corinth, for there she was with him, and from thence she went on St. Paul's errand to carry this epistle to the Romans, as it is in the subscription. The same he affirms distinctly of the brethren, i. e., the "faithful that came from Macedonia," ὑστέρημά μου προσανεπλήρωσαν, "they supplied my wants." And so still the Corinthians had the Gospel for nothing. By these three means the Apostle kept himself from being burdensome to them. But you will wonder, perhaps, why St. Paul was so favourable to these Corinthians, so strictly and almost superstitiously careful not to be burdensome or chargeable to them. This I confess was a receding from a right of his apostleship, and more than will be obligatory or exemplary to us; nay, more than he would yield to, as matter of prescription to himself, in other Churches, for there, it is apparent, he made use of that privilege; but then it is still the more strange he did it not at Corinth. The reason I can but guess at to be this; the Church of Christ in other parts at that time, particularly in Jerusalem, was in some distress, and it was committed to St. Paul's trust to get a contribution out of all other parts for them; this contribution is called by an unusual phrase, χάρις, "grace," I know not how many times in chap. viii. of this epistle, which I conceive the very word which in Latin and English is called charity, *caritas*, ἀπὸ τῆς χάριτος, in a sense that Aristotle uses χάρις[d]; and as it is all one with κοινωνία, "communication," "distribution," "ministering to the saints," and as in the benediction χάρις, "grace," and κοινωνία, "communion," are words of the like importance.

ver. 6.
ver. 4.
Rom. xvi. 1.
[2 Cor. xi. 9.]
[ver. 1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 19.]
ver. 4.
[2 Cor. xiii. 13.]

[d] καθ' ἣν ὁ ἔχων λέγεται χάριν ὑπουργεῖν τῷ δεομένῳ. Rhet. ii. 7.

SERM. XI.

Where by the way let me put you in mind of one special part of the minister's charge, wherever he officiates by doctrine and by cheerful example, by preaching the duty and the benefits and setting them lively copies of it, to raise up the charity of his people, and from that to see to the liberal provision of all that are in want in that place; yea, and if need be, that it overflow its own banks (if they be narrow) and extend to the watering of others also. In the primitive times the offertory was the constant means of doing this, no man of ability ever coming to the Sacrament without remembering the Corban, and out of that treasury the *προεστὼς*, or "priest," being enabled[e], *πᾶσιν ἁπλῶς ἐν χρείᾳ οὖσι κηδεμὼν γίνεται*, "became the common guardian of all that were in want;" the weight of which task was so great in the Apostles' times that they were fain to erect a new order in the Church to assist them particularly in this, *διακονεῖν τραπέζαις*, "to furnish tables," i. e., distribute maintenance out of that bank to all that were in need. I wish heartily our care and our practice may not fall too short from such a venerable example. Well, there being need more than ordinary at that time for our Apostle to quicken his Corinthians' liberality to the poor brethren of other Churches, was the reason, I conceive, of his renouncing all part of their liberality to himself, inflaming their charity by that means, shewing them first in himself a pattern and example of bounty, bestowing the diviner food of their very souls upon them, as freely as the sun extends his beams or the stars their influence, pouring down heaven upon them in a shower, and yet to exceed the clouds in their bounty, never thinking of any means to draw from them to his own sphere any the least tribute out of their fatness, abundantly satisfied if those clouds that have been so enriched by him will melt or sweat out some of their charity to others, give poor Christians leave to be the better for their fulness. Having given you an account of the Apostle's practice in this *non vestra*, renouncing, disclaiming any profit or gain from his labours among the Corinthians, I proceed to enquire why he boasts of it in this place, and keeps it not secret betwixt himself and God, but in several phrases mentions it over and over again, *οὐ*

Acts vi. 2.

[2 Cor. xii. 14, 16, 17.]

[e] Just. Mart. Apol. [i. c. 65. p. 83, A.]

SERM. XI.

κατενάρκησα, οὐ κατεβάρησα, οὐκ ἐπλεονέκτησα, "I have not overcharged you, I have not burdened you, I have not coveted" any thing from you, and οὐ ζητῶ, "I seek not yours."

The plain truth is, the Apostle is fain to boast, to recite, and rehearse his merits towards them, to demonstrate how, above what strict duty exacted, he hath obliged them, and all little enough to vindicate his ministry, to bring them into any tolerable opinion of him. He had been reproached by them, counted weak, a fool, in the former chapter, and by that means he is compelled thus to glory. The thing that I would have you make matter of meditation from hence, is the constancy of the devil, and his indefatigate perseverance in this grand μεθοδεία τῆς πλάνες, "artifice of deceit," in stealing away men's hearts from their Apostles and pastors, and the mighty successfulness that this meets with, debauching whole nations and Churches at once, particularly all Corinth, —a most numerous populous city of forward Christians, and metropolis of Achaia,—from all love, respect and estimation of their spiritual father, and that within few years after their spiritual birth, by that very Paul begotten in the Gospel. Thus is the present ministry of this kingdom, that very same subordination of bishops, presbyters, and deacons, that so near the Apostles as in Ignatius's time could not be violated without profaneness, and even disclaiming of Christianity, —by him most clearly and distinctly set down almost in every of those epistles, which Vedelius[f] at Geneva, a severe Aristarchus, could not doubt but they were his,—that ministry of ours, the very same that planted the protestant religion among us, watered it with their blood, our Pauls and our Apollos's too, to whom God by that prolifical teeming mar-

ver. 11.

[Eph. iv. 14.]

[f] [The book referred to is entitled 'Apologia pro Ignatio, et Versio ac Notæ ad opera ejus,' Genevæ, 1623. Pearson in his Vindiciæ Ignatianæ (Procem. c. 3,) says of it, 'Nicolaus Vedelius Professor Genevensis rem totam ad examen revocavit, Apologiam pro Ignatio scripsit, novam editionem adornavit, exercitationibus et appendice epistolas illustravit. Tres igitur ille Latinas omnino rejecit quod nimis aperta ipsarum suppositio ei videretur. Reliquas duodecim in duos libros distinxit, quorum prior continet epistolas genuinas, posterior suppositicias. Genuinas tantum agnoscit septem illas ab Eusebio memoratas; reliquas quinque aut perperam inscriptas aut plane suppositicias esse statuit. Præterea in ipsas septem genuinas non pauca irrepsisse stelliorum audacissimorum vestigia testatur, quæ notulis quibusdam in margine positis jugulavit.—Patr. Apost., ad calc., tom. ii. p. 267.]

SERM. XI.

tyrdom of theirs hath since raised up a most numerous, learned, orthodox seed, ready, I doubt not, in defence of our religion, to fill up the sufferings of their fathers; to dye their garments in the same winepress; to run, if occasion should be, and crowd into that fiery chariot, and there like the ancient *ἀποβάται* in Athenæus[g], fight, and shoot out of those warm seats, *καὶ ἀγωνίζεσθαι*, "and contend earnestly for that faith that was once delivered to the saints" in this kingdom: this so learned, puissant, orthodox ministry of ours;—yet how is it by the sons and daughters of their love, their sweat, their prayers, their tears, their lungs, their bowels, sorry am I to say, by some sons of the very prophets, defamed and vilified? I speak not this either to raise or envenom any passion in my fellow brethren, but, God knows, out of two other more useful designs; 1. from the common fate of others, and even this Apostle before us, to leave off wondering at this act of God's providence in permitting, and Satan's malice in attempting it. "Think it not strange," saith the Apostle, "concerning the fiery trial;" this I cannot call by that title, it is rather the airy trial, a blast of poisonous vapour, that Satan in a kind of hypochondriacal fit hath belched out against the Church, yet are we to think as little strange of it; it is as familiar for that mouth of hell to breathe out smoke as fire, slanders as slaughters against the Church; Christ was defamed for a glutton, and one that had a devil, crowned with reproaches as well as thorns, first wounded with the sword of the tongue, and then after with nails and spears, made viler than Barabbas by the people's cry before condemned to the cross by Pilate; and when the Master of the house hath been patient to be called Beelzebub, well may a disciple of His retinue digest the title; and therefore methinks St. Paul can write it calmly, "we are become," *ὡς περικαθάρματα*, "as the off-scouring," and *πάντων περίψημα*, it is a phrase of mighty intimation, like a man that in a plague-time is chosen out, the vilest, unsavouriest in the city, carried about in the guise of nastiness, then whipt, then burnt in a ditch, or cast into the sea, every man giving him a *γένου περίψημα*, and *γένου κάθαρμα*, "Let the curse of the whole city light on thee." And thus, saith the Apostle, are we

[Jude 3.]

[1 Pet. iv. 12.]

[Mat. xi. 19; Luke vii. 35; John vii. 20; viii. 48, 52; x. 20.]

[Mat. x. 25.]

[1 Cor. iv. 13.]

g [Athenæi Deipnos., lib. xiv. p. 638, C.; et annot. p. 801. ed. Casaubon.]

become, we Apostles, we ministers; yea, and *θέατρον τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ ἀγγέλοις καὶ ἀνθρώποις*, "a spectacle to the world, and angels, and men," *θέατρον*, "the theatre" for all the *θηριομαχίαι κατ' ἀνθρώπων*, as some, I say not how well, have lightly changed the phrase, "combating with men as with lions and bears," or else *θέατρον*, the stage and scene for the whole world of fiends and men to act their tragedies upon, and no manner of news in all this. Even among the heathen, the grammarians[h] tell us, that never any comedy of Aristophanes took so well as his Clouds, that was spent all in reproaching of Socrates, and under that title involved the whole condition of learning; though through Alcibiades' faction, *excidit*, it miscarried, missed its applause once or twice, yet when men were left to their own humours it was cried up extremely. And therefore not to think it strange, that is the first thing; yea, and secondly, to make it matter of rejoicing and triumphing, of a *χαίρετε καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε*, a plain shouting for joy, or, as we render it, exceeding gladness, that they are worthy of this degree of Christian preferment, to suffer shame for Christ's name; that woe of Christ's we have been generally secure and safe from, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you," we have had in all ages friends, good store, that will not let this curse light on us; and blessed be God, if it prove *ἡμεῖς ἔσχατοι*, "we of the last age" peculiarly, that that great blessing is reserved for. *Μακάριοι ὅταν ὀνειδίσωσιν καὶ διώξωσι, καὶ εἴπωσι πᾶν πονηρὸν ῥῆμα*, "blessed are ye when men shall revile and persecute and say every evil word against you;" but withal let us be sure to take along with us the *ψευδόμενοι*, "falsely," that follows, that it be our innocence that is thus reviled. The devil is most ready to do it then, being *κατήγορος τῶν ἀδελφῶν*, "accuser of the brethren," the best Christians, that he may exercise two of his attributes at once, accuser and liar both. If he do not so, I am sure it will be small matter of rejoicing to us, small comfort in "suffering as a thief," saith the Apostle, though all joy in suffering "as a Christian;" and so small comfort in the *ὀνειδίσωσιν*, being reproached, unless the *ψευδόμενοι*, "falsely," be joined with it. And therefore you must add that caution

SERM. XI.

[1 Cor. iv. 9.]

1 Cor. xv. 32.

Mat. v. 12.

Luke vi. 26.

[1 Cor. iv. 9.]

Mat. v. 11.

[Rev. xii. 10.]

[1 Pet. iv. 15, 16.]

[h] [Grammat. Aristoph. *ὑπόθεσις δ. τῆς ὕλης ποιήσεως κάλλιστον εἶναί φησι* ad Nub. ed. Dind. *τὸ δὲ δρᾶμα τοῦτο καὶ τεχνικώτατον.*]

SERM. XI.

to your comfort, that they be your good, at least your justifiable deeds, that be evil spoken of, or else it will not be a *sic prophetas,* the prophets were used like you. The clergyman that in such a time as this, when the mouth of hell is open against us, shall think fit to open any other mouth to join in the cry against the Church, to give life or tongue to any scandalous sin, and set that to its *clamans de terra,* "crying from the ground;" that shall with any one real crime give authority to all the false pretended ones that are laid to the charge of our calling; that by drunkenness or incontinence, by luxury or sloth, by covetousness or griping, by insolence or pride, by oaths or uncomely jesting, by contention or intemperate language, by "repaying evil for evil, or railing for defamations;" shall exasperate this raging humour, and give it true nourishment to feed on; what doth he but turn broiler and *boutefeu,* make new libels against the Church, and by that means persuade credulous, seducible spectators, that all are true that have been made already. I know not what climax or aggravation of woes is heavy enough for that man; all the lamentations and θρηνωδίαι in the Bible, "Alas my brother," will not reach unto it; that of the "millstone about the neck," or the *Melius si nunquam natus esset,* "it had been better if he had never been born," are the fittest expressions for him. St. Paul for the vindicating his ministry from vileness, was fain to mention all the good deeds he had ever done among them. O let not us bring our evil to remembrance by acting them over afresh, but think it most abundantly sufficient that we have already thus contributed to the defaming of our calling. He that hath done so formerly, that by the guilt of any one scandalous sin (and it need not be of the first magnitude to deserve that title in a minister) hath contributed aught to the vilifying of the whole order, it is now time for him to see what he hath done, been a troubler of Israel, set the whole kingdom in an animosity against the clergy; and when will he be able to weep enough in secret to wash out this stain, incorporate into the very woof of our robe? I shall no further aggravate the sin upon him than to prepare him to seek out for some remedy, and to that end to bear me company to my last particular, how far we are concerned in the transcribing St. Paul's pattern, how far that

[Mat. v. 12.]
[Gen. iv. 10.]
[1 Pet. iv. 9.]
[1 Kings xiii. 30; Mat. xviii. 6.]
[Mat. xxvi. 24.]
[1 Kings xviii. 17.]

practice and that end is imitable by us that are here assembled. SERM. XI.

This practice consists of two parts, a positive and a negative. The positive part of this practice, the ἀλλὰ ὑμᾶς, "but you," hath no case of scruple or difficulty in it; the "you" are the Corinthians' souls. As in other places the souls signify the persons, so "many souls went out of Egypt[i]," i. e., so many men; so here, by way of exchange or quittance on the other side, "you," i. e., your souls, according to that of Pythagoras[j] of old, ἡ ψυχὴ σὺ, "thy soul is thou." And then add the ζητῶ, "I seek," to it, and it gives you the uncontradicted duty of a minister, to be a seeker of souls, the spiritual Nimrod, the "hunter before the Lord," hunter of men, hunter [Gen. x. 9.] of souls: and that indeed as wild and untameable, subtle a game, as any wilderness can yield; so unwilling to come into our toils, so wise in their generation to escape our snares, so cunning to delude all our stratagems of bringing them to heaven, that a man may commonly labour a whole night and [Luke v. 5.] catch nothing. "He that winneth," or taketh "souls, is Prov. xi. 30. wise," saith the Wise Man. A piece of wisdom it is not suddenly learned, a game wherein all the wisdom of the world, the φρόνησις σαρκὸς, the "prudence of the flesh," and the cunning of hell, are all combined in the party against us, for this ἀμφισβήτημα θεοῦ καὶ δαιμόνων, as Synesius[k] calls the soul, "this stake betwixt God and devils." And the game must be very carefully played, and dexterously managed on our side, if we think ever to win it out of their hands. The manner of pastors, as of shepherds among us, is much changed from what it was in the eastern parts of the world, in Greece and in Jewry. The sheep, saith the philosopher in his time, would be led by a green bough[l], and follow whithersoever you would have them; and so in the Scripture is still mention of leading of sheep, and of the people like Ps. lxxvii. sheep; but now they must be driven and followed, yea, and [20.] sometime by worrying brought into the fold, or else there is no getting them into the fairest loveliest pasture. The sheep

[i] [Gen. xxvi. 46; the words are, "came into Egypt."]

[j] [Hierocl. in Aur. Carm. Pythag., in ver. 24.]

[k] [καὶ προσέθηκεν, ὡς ἠμφισβήτησαν ἡμῖν πρὸς θεὸν δαίμονες. Synesii Epist. 57. adv. Andronicum.]

[l] [Platon. Phædr., p. 238, C.]

SERM. XI.

John x. [3,] 8.

were then a hearing and a discerning sort of creatures, could hear the shepherd, and know his voice from all others, and when the thief and robber came, the sheep did not hear them; but now it is quite contrary, either not hearing at all, profaneness and dissoluteness hath possessed our souls with the

[Rom. xi. 8.] πνεῦμα κατανύξεως, "spirit of slumber," torpor, absolute deafness, that all our hearing of sermons is but a slumber of such a continuance; or else having no ears for any but the thief and robber, if any come on that errand to rob us of our charity, of our obedience, of our meek and quiet spirits, and infuse calumnies, animosities, railings, qualities that *ipso facto* work metamorphoses in us, change sheep into wolves; his voice

[Acts xii. 22.] shall be heard, and admired, and deified, like Herod's, "the voice of God and not of man," though nothing be so contrary to God or godliness as that voice. In this and many other considerations it is that the ζητῶ, "I seek," here is so necessary. All our pains and industry, diligence and sagacity, are little enough to bring men into the true way to heaven, so many bye ways on every side inviting and flattering us out of it, so much good company persuading, nay, so many false leaders directing us into error, that a minister had need fasten himself into the ground, like a Mercury's post in this division of ways, and never leave holloaing, and calling, and disabusing of passengers with a "This is the way, walk in it;" or in

[Heb. xii. 14.] the Apostle's words, "Follow peace with all men,"—διώκετε, "pursue" and follow it,—"and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord;" peace and holiness, two such strangers, such prodigies in the world,—having taken their leaves so solemnly with Astræa for heaven,—that unless they be followed with a διώκετε, "full speed," as in a hue and cry, there is small hope of overtaking or bringing them back again to the earth. And yet without them heaven must be fain to turn an unhabitable part of the world, *pars globi incognita*, as empty of saints as it is full of glory; without them *nemo Deum*, "no man shall see God." Could I imagine it possible for me to be instrumental to you in this work, to advise or direct you in this course, this method of seeking your people's souls, so that God might one day find them in this temper, *in pace et sanctitate*, "in peace and holiness," I should put off all the reverence that I bear to this assembly, all considera-

SERM. XI.

tion of the business of this day, and venture to be unseasonable that I might be useful to you in this point. But I know there be no general rules that can promise themselves such a successfulness; the variety of tempers must have different accommodations, and well if after using of all means we can be able to save any. The way most probable in my conceit is the bringing men acquainted with the difference betwixt the first and second covenant; then pitching on the second, as that that belongs to us Christians, to shew them the condition of this covenant in the gross, the *νόμος πίστεως*, "law of faith," made up of commands as well as promises, all the gospel precepts that join together to complete that codex, that law of repentance, self-denial, charity, the new creature, which St. Paul interprets *πίστις ἐνεργουμένη δι' ἀγάπης*, "faith consummate by love," or, as St. James, *τελειουμένη δι' ἔργων*, "perfected by works," sincere, impartial, constant, though not unsinning, perfect obedience. And then, if you will have it in the retail, the sermon in the mount will give it you completely. Were men but possessed that those duties there mentioned, with the *ego autem*, "but I say to you," were duties indeed, not only phrases and forms of speech, that they are not only by grace made possible to a Christian,—an easy yoke, light burden, and a command nigh unto thee, i. e. *οὐχ ὑπέρογκος*, as the LXXII render that place of Deuteronomy from whence it is cited,—but also most indispensably necessary, without which *nemo Deum*, "none shall see God," God's oath being gone out against all others, with a *nunquam introibunt*, "they shall never enter into His rest;" it would, I conceive, within a while be found necessary either to give over pretending toward heaven, or else to observe those gesses[m], that alone of all others can bring us thither; and so the world of Christians be once more divided, as Epiphanius[n] saith it was in the first ages, not into orthodox and heretical,—for those are titles that every man will apply as he lists, the one to himself and his adherents, the other to all others that he disfancies,—nor again into spiritual and carnal,—for those were abused too in Tertullian's time, as soon as ever he turned Montanist, then straight *nos spiri-*

[Rom. iii. 27.]

[Gal. v. 6; Jas. ii. 22.]

Mat. v., vi.

[Mat. xi. 30.] Rom. x. 8. [Deut. xxx. 14.]

[Heb. iii. 11.]

[m] [See above, p. 30, note.]

[n] [S. Epiphan. adv. Hær., lib. i. c. 5. See above, p. 166.]

SERM. XI.

tuales, "we spiritual," and all others *animales psychici*[o], mere "animal men,"—but into εὐσεβεῖς καὶ ἀσεβεῖς, "godly and ungodly livers," and so impiety, injustice, and uncharitableness be the grand heresies to be anathematized, and peace and holiness the most orthodox Christian tenets in our religion. But then for the achieving this aim, let me tell you that men must have more than sermons to lead them; the visible preachings of your lives must συνεργεῖν, "co-operate," and join in the work of drawing sinners to God, or else it will hardly prove successful. You know the story in Gellius, when that excellent counsel was given at Lacedæmon by one that was *vita defamatissimus*, "infamous for a very ill life," they were to take the counsel out of his mouth, and appoint a good man to deliver it, though a worse orator[p]. Two things the gospel was first planted by, teaching and miracles, and those miracles in Scripture phrase are called "works," and "mighty works." Now though the miracles be outdated, yet the ἔργα, "works," in the other sense, must never be antiquated, it is they that the δύναμις, "power," belongs to, the efficacy, and force, and mightiness of our preaching, which if it be not added to our sermons, our threats will be taken for mormos, our promises for delusions, our exhortations out of Scripture for acts of tyranny and oppression, laying those burdens on other men's shoulders which we will not touch with our own fingers. But if our lives bear witness to our doctrine, by letting them see us write those copies with our own hands which we require them to transcribe, then, as Polybius[q] saith of Philopœmen, that good orator and good man, (and the goodness of the man was the special piece of his oratory,) οὐ μόνον ἀποτρέπει, ἀλλὰ καὶ παρορμᾷ, "we shall not only persuade but enforce our auditors;" this is the only honest way of insinuating ourselves into our people's affections, by letting them see how hearty our exhortations are, by our zeal to observing them ourselves; by shewing what miracles of reformation the Gospel is able to work on them, by an essay of its efficacy on our own breasts. And if this positive part of St. Paul's practice be perfectly conned, the negative will fol-

[Mat.xxiii. 4.]

[o] [Vid. Tertull. de Monogamia, p. 525, passim.]

[p] [Aul. Gell. Noct. Att., lib. xviii. 3.]

[q] [Polyb. xi. 10.]

low, the *non vestra*, "not yours." He that heartily and affectionately seeks the souls of his auditors, will never pitch design on any thing else that is theirs; the crown that belongs to him that converteth many to righteousness, is too rich to receive lustre or commendation from any inferior accession, or acquisition from any thing that the *vestra*, "yours," can signify. He that hath any consideration of the *vestra*, "yours," in this work of a pastor, is the *μισθωτὸς*, the "mercenary hireling," that Christ so prejudiceth with the *φεύγει* and *οὐ μέλει προβάτων*, "he flies, and he cares not for the sheep," from no other topic of proof, but only *ὅτι μισθωτὸς*, "because he is an hireling." And of what ill consequence it was foreseen this would be in the Church, you may conjecture by that one act of the administration of God's providence in this behalf, constantly observable through all ages. That no minister of God's might be forced to such viler submissions, driven out of that apostolical, generous ingenuity, ("freely have you received, freely give,") into Gehazi's meanness and mercenariness, selling and bartering that sacred function, the gifts of the Holy Ghost, or the exercise of those gifts—it is, no doubt, that God's providence hath in all ages so liberally provided for endowing of the Church. Among that people where He Himself so immediately presided, that, saith Josephus[r], it could not be called by the style of any other nation, monarchy, aristocracy, but *θεοκρατεία*, neither administered by kings or senates, but immediately by God Himself; there the Levites, without any of their own arts or pursuits, were much the richest tribe of the twelve, lost nothing by having no portion among their brethren: not to mention their parts in sacrifices and offerings, and their forty-eight cities with suburbs, made over to them, the Lord's being their inheritance, i. e., the instating the tithes upon them was demonstratively as large a revenue to them, as, supposing an equal division, the remainder could be to any other tribe, yea, and larger too, as much as the twelve tenth parts which they received exceeded the nine that remained to each tribe after the decimation; i. e., by one third part of what was left to any tribe. And among Christians in the infancy of the Church, before the ministry was endowed with any certain portion,

SERM. XI.

[Dan. xii. 3.]

John x. 13.

[Mat. x. 8.]

Num. xxxv. [7.]

[r] [Joseph. contr. Apion., lib. ii. c. 16.]

SERM. XI.

yet sure the *κοινωνία τῶν ἁγίων*, "the Christians selling their lands, and bringing the price of them to the Apostles' feet," though not for them to inclose, yet for them to partake of, as well as to distribute, kept them from any necessity of the *quæro vestra*, seeking that which was other men's. Nay, where that provision was not to be expected, as in their travels and journeyings, yet the staff and the scrip are interdicted the Apostles, and under those two phrases, the *quæro vestra*, the making any gain by the Gospel, the staff in that place was, according to the custom of the Jews, *baculus paupertatis*, "the staff of poverty," which Jacob intimates when he saith, "with my staff I went over Jordan," i. e., in another phrase, a poor Syrian ready to perish, particularly *ῥάβδος πτωχείας*, the sign of a mendicant,—which the Germans call at this day, battelstab, from the Greek *αἰτεῖν*, this begging or craving staff,—and this, with the scrip, was forbidden the Apostles in St. Matthew, though in Mark's relation, another kind of staff, the staff for travel, be permitted them. To shew God's absolute dislike of *quæro vestra* in Apostles, even before any certain provision was made for their maintenance, God, that "feeds the young ravens," sustains the destitute,—and believe it, His exchequer is no contemptible bank, His table in the wilderness is served with quails and manna,—undertaking to provide for them sufficiently by some other means. And since by that same providence the Church is now endowed again in most parts of Christendom, and God's severe denunciations against sacrilege set as an hedge of thorns about Levi's portion, sure to prick, and fester, and rankle in his flesh that shall dare to break in upon it, what is this but still a continued expression of God's dislike of the *quæro vestra*, who hath therefore made over His own portion on us, that therewith we might be contented, and provided for, without the *πλεονεκτεῖν*, without letting loose our hands or our appetites on other men's possessions? You see then, by the way, the error of those, that from this practice of the Apostle are ready to prescribe us absolute poverty, that will have all the lawful proper revenues of the Church prohibited, under the *vestra*, and then claiming of tithes or any other ecclesiastic endowment shall get under that style, and the Apostle's *non quæro* urged for a precedent against us; with

[Acts ii. 42; iv. 32—37.]

Mat. x. 10.

[Gen. xxxii. 10; Deut. xxvi. 5.]

[Mark vi. 8.]

[Ps. cxlvii. 9.]

[2 Cor. xiii.] 17.

how little law or logic you will perceive, when you remember that the tithe, or what else is consecrated, is by the very laws of this kingdom (to derive the pedigree no further) as much the minister's own, held by the same tenure of donation first, then of parliamentary confirmation, that any man's inheritance descends unto him, and therefore to demand them is no more a *quæro vestra* than to demand a rent of a tenant; in a word, a direct *mea*, not *vestra*, a "right," and not a "gratuity." Nay, the learned Jews have gone further[s]; that if the tithe be not paid the whole heap becomes God's portion, and cite it as a speech of God's, that if "thou pay the tithe it is thy corn, if not, it is God's corn," and therefore, saith he, it is said, "therefore I will return and take away My corn in the time thereof, and My wine in the season thereof;" like that land that is held *in capite*, with a rent reserved, the non-payment of the rent or homage is the forfeiting of the tenure. But I desire not to follow this Jew in his meditation, but rather to come home to ourselves, and not only to interdict ourselves, the *quæro vestra*, but even regulate us in the *quæro nostra*, purge out of this assembly whatever may savour of the Jew, all griping, or rigour, or sourness, or *summum jus*, even in the *quæro nostra*, "seeking that that is our own." To this purpose in the first place, not to seek all that is our own; though it were not a fault in the lay Pharisee, (ἀποδεκατοῦτε ἡδύοσμον,) "to pay tithe of cummin," and the smallest herb, yet perhaps it may be in the priest to require it; a fault not of injustice, or the *quæro vestra*, but of sordidness and meanness in the *quæro mea*. Aristotle[t] I am sure would condemn it under that style of φειδωλοὶ, γλισχροὶ, κίμβικες, too much poorness and tenuity of mind, τῇ δόσει ἐλλείπειν, τῶν δὲ ἀλλοτρίων οὐκ ἐφίεσθαι, "though not in desiring other men's," the *quæro vestra* in the text, yet in want or defect of that liberality, ingenuity, that is required of the moral man, which he there specifies by the κυμινοπρίστης, "exactness" even to the partition of a cummin seed, a fault, if observable in a heathen, then sure censurable in a Christian, and in a minister vile and scandalous. When this is resolved against in the first place, as illiberal, degenerous, and beggarly, contrary to that generosity and superiority of

SERM. XI.

Hos. xi. 9.

Mat. xxiii. 23.

[s] R. Bechai on Deut. xiv. [comment. in Legem.]

[t] Eth. iv. 1. [39.]

SERM. XI.

mind that our profession should be thought to infuse into us; the next thing I must require of you in the *quæro mea* is a general unconcernedness in the things of this world, "using the world as if we used it not[u]," possessing the wealth we have, but not being possessed by it,—for then it turns our devil or familiar,—as able to part with it at God's call as to receive it at His gift, pouring it out upon every His intimation, seeking and projecting for advantages to be the better for this false mammon by being "rich in good works," and when we see it a parting from us of its own accord, taking a cheerful unconcerned leave of it, retaining so much of the sceptic as the *ἀταραξία* amounts to, an untroubledness with these inferior events, and of the stoic or wise man in Antoninus[v], as *οὐ ποιεῖν τραγῳδίας*, "to act no passionate, lugubrious, tragical" part, whatever secular provocation cross us on the stage. Then thirdly, an entire contentedness with our lot, that duty of the last commandment, which is absolutely required to the *non quæro vestra*, or as our Apostle interprets himself, the *οὐκ ἐπλεονέκτησα*, not, as we render it, "not making a gain," but not desiring, coveting any thing that is another's. To this purpose excellently Epictetus[x] of old, that he that tastes and carves to himself of those dishes only that are set before him, reaches not after those that are out of his distance, *αὐτὸς ὄντως θεῶν συμπότης*, is fit for a guest at God's table; which you may make, if you please, a periphrasis of a minister. Did I not fear that this were a duty of too great perfection for some of my auditors, an *unusquisque non potest capere*, "every one cannot receive it," I should go on with that divine philosopher, that he that abstains from that which is set before him, contemns that riches that comes knocking at his door, *οὐ μόνον συμπότης τῶν θεῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ συνάρχων*, "is not only a guest at His board, but a companion in His throne," and that is the pitch that I would commend unto you, if I might hope you would endeavour after it. But then fourthly, and lastly, the *minimum quod sic*,—that that I must not leave you till you have promised me, wrestle till break of day, except you will thus bless me,—the

[1 Cor. vii. 31.]

[Mat. xix. 11.]

[Gen. xxxii. 26.]

[u] [*ὡς μὴ καταχρώμενοι.* E. V. "as not abusing it." Hammond's version is now generally adopted.]

[v] [Vide Antonini ad Seipsum, iii. 7.]

[x] [Epicteti Enchiridion, cap. 21.]

SERM. XI.

lowest degree that can be reconcilable or compatible with an Apostle, is the not suffering your *quæro vestra*, "your hope" or design of secular advantages, gaining of gratuities, gaining of applause, to have any the least influence on your preaching, to intermix never so little in your seeking of souls. This is the καπηλεύειν τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ, "dashing" or "embasing the word of God," corrupting it with our unworthy mixtures, making it instrumental to our gain or popularity, the meanest office, the vilest submission in the world. I remember a note of Procopius[y] on 2 Kings, that Elisha sending his servant to cure the Shunamite's child, forbids him to pass any compliment with any by the way; I had thought it had been for speed, but he saith, ᾔδει τὸ φιλότιμον· ἡ δὲ φιλοδοξία τὴν θαυματουργίαν κωλύει, "he knew his popular humour, and that popularity hinders working of miracles;" and then by the same reason we may conclude that that must needs enervate the word of God, and make it heartless and lifeless in our hands, and the minister that is given to it will hardly ever work wonders in the curing or recovering of souls. But that servant you know had another fault, φιλαργυρία, "desire of money," ἡ τῆς κακίας μητρόπολις, "the mother city whence all wickedness comes forth," said Bion[z] of old; and Timon[a] puts them both together, ἀπληστία καὶ φιλοδοξία τῶν κακῶν στοιχεῖα, "insatiate love of wealth and honour are the elements of evil;" and it is strange to see how truly those wise men were called *vates*, what prophets they were, what direct satires those words of theirs are against the times we live in. Our ἀπληστία and φιλοδοξία, "covetousness and popularity," are the elements of all the ruin, the seeds of all the desolation that is threatened against this Church; some of us by the notorious scandalous guilt of those two crimes, tempting rash uncharitable spectators to resolve that those sins are the *formalis ratio* of a clergyman, accidents of the essence, and inseparable from the order; and it is not the illogicalness of the inference that will excuse them that have joined with Satan in temptation to make that conclusion, nor de-

[2 Cor. ii. 17.]

[2 Kings iv. 29.]

[1 Tim. vi. 10.]

[y] [Procopii Schol. in libb. Reg. et Paralip. ad loc., p. 285. ed. Meursius.]

[z] [Apud Stobæum, tit. 10. n. 38. tom. i. p. 293. ed. Gaisford.]

[a] [Ibid., n. 54. p. 296.]

SERM. XI.

liver us from the destruction that follows it. Others of us on the contrary side, but from the same principles, decrying all due either of maintenance or respect to the clergy, divesting themselves of all but contempt and drudgery, hoping—we have just reason to suspect—by flying both to be courted by them both, to have them more sure at the rebound than they can at the fall, to run from them here most violently, that they may have them alone to themselves when they meet at the antipodes. What imprudent bargains such men are likely to make if they should be taken at their words; what skittish things popular benevolence and popular applause have been always found to be, experience hath taught others. I desire even they that make that choice may never pay so dear for that knowledge; but whatever the error prove in the transitory commodities of this world, it matters little, for wealth and honour are, sure, things that we may go to heaven without, and so, for as much as concerns our individuals, are not necessary to us as Christians; yet can I not assure you, but that they are necessary to us in some degree as ministers; wealth in a competence to rescue us from contempt; and respect, at least so far as a *ne quis te* [Tit. ii. 15.] *despiciat*, "let no man despise thee," to keep us from being utterly unprofitable; some revenue of our own, to keep us from the *quæro vestra*, and some authority of our own, to enable us for the *quæro vos*, somewhat of either from the character of our office, that we be not tempted to seek either by unlawful means to purchase the *vestra* by the sale of *vos*, to acquire the favour of our auditors by the exposing of their souls. Think but how probable a fear this may be, when things come to such a complication that he that hath a sin to be preached against hath a benevolence to be preached for; he that hath a wound to be cured, is able to be thankful if he may be kindly used, yea, and to mulct the chirurgeon if he be too rough; when he that hath somewhat to mend, hath also somewhat to give, a commutation to escape his penance; whether this may not prove a temptation to him that hath no other livelihood to depend on, and consequently whether rankling and gangrening may not be looked for as an ordinary title in our weekly bills, when the skinning of wounds is become the gainful craft, and compliance and

popularity the great Diana, that trade by which men have their wealth. But perhaps the most of this is an extravagance, I wish and pray it may prove an unnecessary one.

There is yet one branch of the application behind; the end why St. Paul delivered this text of mine, that I told you was the vindicating his ministry from contempt, the gaining some authority with the Corinthians. And let that be our method also, to come to that end by the *non vestra sed vos*, not to acquire that thin blast of air that chameleons are wont to feed on, but that solid substantial estimation that dwells only in the account of God and the hearts of true Corinthians; that that may disperse those fumes of prejudices that Satan is wont to blast the minister with when any saving effect is to be wrought by his ministry, that unblemished reputation here, that when it is to be had is a precious blessing, very instrumental to the edifying of others, and is a kind of coronet here in this life, preparatory to that crown hereafter. And sure there is no work of ours that we can justly hope God will think fit to reward with such a crown, but the sincere labouring in the word and doctrine, filling our souls with the earnest desire of saving others, espousing it as the sole felicity of our lives, the one promotion that we aspire to, to people heaven with saints, to send whole colonies of inhabitants thither. It was the excellence and pride of the ancient Jews, yea, and the craft peculiar to them, saith Josephus, τεκνοποιητικὴ, "getting of children, propagating miraculously," and the barren was the most infamous person among them, "Behold I go childless, the saddest lamentation," and "Give me children or else I die," and "Take away our reproach," most pathetical Scripture expressions; yea, and among the Romans the *jus trium liberorum*, "the right of three children," you know what a prerogative it was. This is our trade, my brethren, to beget children to heaven, and according to the law of the Goel in Deuteronomy, now our elder Brother (Christ) is dead, we are the men, who by right of propinquity are obliged to raise up seed to our elder Brother. O let it not be our reproach to go thus childless to our graves, at least our guilt and just accusation to bereave our Saviour of that seed He expects from us; you know what a sin it was to repine at that duty;

[Gen. xv. 2; xxxi. 23; Luke i. 25.]

[Deut. xxv. 5.]

SERM. XI.

let not us be wanting to Christ in this so charitable a service; charitable to Christ, that His blood may not have been shed in vain; charitable to others, whom we may by God's blessing convert unto righteousness, and the charity will at last devolve on ourselves, who by this means shall "shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever."

[Dan. xii. 3.]

SERMON XII.

PREACHED IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCH BEFORE THE LORD MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF LONDON, ON APRIL 12, A.D. 1640.

THE POOR MAN'S TITHING.

DEUT. xxvi. 12, 13.

When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year... Then thou shalt say before the Lord thy God...

THAT the first sound of this text may not possess you with an expectation of a vicar's plea, a discourse of tithes, and querulous invective against sacrilege; and consequently by this prejudice your ears and hearts be fortified, impenetrable and impregnable against the speaker and the sermon; that I may reconcile the choice of this text with the imploring and hoping for your patience; I shall immediately deliver you from your fears, by assuring you that the main of this text is, and the total of my discourse shall be, bent quite toward another coast, that which in the sincerity of my heart I conceive may best comply with your designs, either as Christians, or as men, most tend to your serving of Christ, and enriching of yourselves with the increase of your wealth here and glory hereafter. And when I have told you this, I cannot choose but say that I am your friend, and for that may claim not as an act of favour, but justice, the payment of this debt, the return of your patience in receiving, and care in practising what shall be delivered.

There was a double tithing among the Jews, the every year's tithing and the third year's tithing; the every year's tithing you know whose patrimony it was; but after that was set apart and presented unto the owners every third year, there was another to be raised, over and above, for the stranger,

SERM. XII.

chap. xiv. 29.

Deut. xiv. 23.

[Deut. xxvi.] 15.

the fatherless, and the widow, as you may see it enacted. This was called by the rabbins the second tithing, and in another respect the third by some of them,—the tithe for feasts going for the second, and the tithe of the tithes, which the Levites paid the high-priest, going for the fourth, in that account,—but most significantly מעשר עני "the tithe for the poor," πτωχοδεκατὴ[a] in Josephus, the "poor man's tithing," or in the words of the text, the *compleveris decimare anno tertio*, "the making an end of tithing the third year." Till this were done there wanted a *compleveris;* whatever other dues were paid the work was incomplete, and upon the performance of that, here is a stock of confidence toward God for him that hath done it, a right invested on him to all the abundance of Canaan, a justifiable pretension to all temporal blessings, which he may depend on and challenge at God's hand; it were but a cold expression to say he might expect by petition, I will add, he may require by claim, and produce his patent for it here in my text, *Cum compleveris, &c.*, "When thou hast made an end," &c.

This text I have upon advice resolved not to divide into parts, but my discourse upon it I shall, by setting it these bounds and limits; 1. That it presents unto you the duty of almsgiving by occasion of these words, *Cum compleveris decimare anno tertio*, "when thou hast made an end of tithing... the third year." 2. The benefit arising from the performance of this duty from the rest, *Dicas coram Domino*, "then thou shalt" or mayest "say," i. e., hast right and power to say, "before the Lord thy God." In our progress through the first of these we shall observe these gesses[b]; 1. We shall begin with the ὅτι, consider alms-giving simply, deducing the practice of the Jews down to us Christians, and so in a manner give you the history of alms-giving. 2. We shall look into the πόσον, what portion ought to issue out of every man's revenues, taking our rise from the practice of the Jews, "a tithe of all increase every third year." 3. We shall proceed to the ὅτι δεῖ, consider it as a duty, and then we shall have done with the first general.

[a] [This word is used by St. Jerome, Comm. in Ezek., lib. xiv. c. 45. Op., tom. v. col. 565, C; the reference to Josephus seems to be a mistake.]

[b] [See note at p. 30.]

SERM. XII.

In the second general we shall shew you, 1. *In thesi*, that confidence or claiming any thing at God's hands, must take its rise from duty in performance, "Then thou mayest say;" then, but not before. 2. *In hypothesi*, shew you the connection between this confidence and this performance, claiming of temporal plenty, upon giving of alms. These are the several posts and stages of my future discourse, the monogram drawn in coal, as it were, wherein you may discern the lines and lineaments of the whole body; I must now descend to the filling them up, and giving you them a little more to the life, taking them in the order proposed, very loosely, and very plainly, making provision for your hearts, not your ears, for your future gain and not your present sensuality, and begin with the first general, and in that, the ὅτι, or alms-giving, simply considered, deducing the practice of the Jews down to us Christians, and so give you in a manner the history of alms-giving.

Though we assert not an equality of worldly riches from any decree either of God or nature, find not any statute of πάντα κοινὰ, any "law of community" in any but Plato's institutions, and those never reduced to practice in any one city in the world,—attempted once by Plotinus, through his favour with Gallienus, who promised to reside in his Platonopolis, but soon altered his purpose again, as Porphyry[c] tells us,—yet I may suppose it for a granted maxim, that the extreme inequality that is now so illustriously visible in the world, is not any act of nature's primary intention, or God's first and general providence; Aristotle[d] may tell us of some φύσει δοῦλοι, some that nature hath bored through the ear to be slaves for ever, and we may believe him if we can find any ground for it, but of any φύσει πτωχοὶ, "colonies of men," sent into the world without any claim or right to any part of the world's goods, he hath not left us any thing upon record. Nor hath the book of creation in the Scripture, the Beresith, or natural philosophy of the Bible, given us any hint for such a resolution, that some should be born to riot, and others to famish, some to be glutted, and others to starve, that mankind should be thus dichotomized into such extreme distant fates, some to reign in paradise for ever, others to be thrown over the

[c] Porph. in Vit. Plotin., [cap. 12.]

[d] [Arist. Polit., lib. i. c. 5.]

SERM. XII.

wall, as out of the Adamites' stove, to pine and freeze among thorns and briars. This were an absolute degree of election and reprobation, improved further than predestinarians have ordinarily extended it. As we are wont to say of sin, that it is not to be found in God's Hexameron, no fruit of His six days' labour, but a production of a later date, engendered betwixt the serpent and the woman, that *incubus* and *succuba*, the devil and the lower soul; so may we say of extreme want and poverty, that its nativity is of the land of Canaan, its father an Amorite, and its mother an Hittite: Satan and covetousness brought it into the world, and then God finding it there —whose glorious attribute it is to extract good out of evil— as He did once a σωτὴρ out of an ἀπολλύων, "redemption" of mankind out of the fall of Adam, and so made the devil an instrument of bringing the Messias into the world; so hath He in like manner by His particular providence ordered and continued this effect of some men's covetousness to become matter of others' bounty, exercise of that one piece of man's divinity, as Pythagoras called liberality, and so *ex his lapidibus*, "out of these stones," out of the extreme want and necessity of our brethren, to raise trophies and monuments of virtue to us, of charity, liberality, and magnificence, of mercy, and bowels of compassion, that most beautiful composition of graces, that most heroical renowned habit of the soul. So that now we may define it an act of God's infinite goodness to permit, though before we could scarce allow it reconcileable with His infinite justice, to decree the extreme inequality of earthly portions, the poor man gasping for food, that the rich may have a storehouse or magazine where to lay up his treasures; the careful labourer, full of children, suffered to wrestle with two extremities at once; hunger on the one side, and natural compassion to the helpless creatures he hath begotten on the other; that thou by thy wealth mayest be that Elijah sent from heaven to the famishing forlorn widow, that godlike man dropped out of the clouds to his relief, and by the omnipotent reviving power of thy charity usurp that attribute of God's given Him by the Psalmist, that "feeds the young ravens" exposed by the old ones, sustain that destitute sort of creatures that call upon thee. Admirable therefore was that contrivance of God's mercy and wisdom, mentioned to the

[Ezek. xvi. 3, 45.]

[Mat. iii. 9.]

[1 Kings xvii.]

[Ps. cxlvii. 9.]

SERM. XII.

Jews, not as a threatening, but a promise of grace, one of the privileges and blessings of Canaan, "the poor shall never cease out of the land," that thou mayest always have somewhat to do with thy wealth, some sluice to exhaust thy plenty, some hungry leech to open a vein, and prevent the access of thy fever, and withal, that thy wealth may ennoble thee, as Xenocrates told his benefactor's children, that he had abundantly requited their father, "for all men spake well of him for his liberality to Xenocrates," or as benefactors among the heathen were adored and deified, that thus thy faithless, fading false-hearted riches,—which the Evangelist therefore styles "mammon of unrighteousness," only as ἄδικον is opposed to ἀληθινὸν, to true durable wealth,—may yield thee more profit by the profusion than by the possession,—as silver doth by melting than by continuing in the wedge or bullion, according to that of Clemens[d], οὐκ ὁ ἔχων καὶ φυλάττων, ἀλλὰ ὁ μεταδιδοὺς πλούσιος, "the rich is he that distributes, not he which hath and possesseth;" and Lactantius[e], *Divites sunt non qui divitias habent, sed qui utuntur illis ad opera justitiæ*, "the rich are they, not which have riches, but use them to works of righteousness,"—purchase thee by being thus providently laid out, a revenue of renown here and glory hereafter. You see then the pedigree and genealogy of alms-giving, how it came into the world; covetousness, and oppression, and rapine, brought in emptiness, and beggary, and want; then God's providence and goodness, finding it in the world, resolves to continue it there to employ the treasures and exercise the charity of others.

Deut. xv. 11.

[Luke xvi. 11.]

Now for the practice of the world in this great affair, we cannot begin our survey more properly than from the text, there to behold God's judgment, in this point, by the rules He hath given to be observed in the city of God, His own people of the Jews, whilst they were managed by God Himself. The priesthood was the peculiar lot of God, and therefore may well be allowed the πρωτοκλισία, "feeding

[d] [S. Clem. Alex. Pædag., lib. 3. ch. 6. p. 275 (Potter). ὥστε οὐχ ὁ ἔχων καὶ φυλάττων, ἀλλ' ὁ μεταδιδοὺς πλούσιος, καὶ ἡ μετάδοσις τό μακάριον, οὐχ ἡ κτῆσις δείκνυσι.]

[e] [Lactantius, Divin. Instit., lib. v. ch. 16. Divitiæ quoque non faciunt insignes, nisi quod possunt bonis operibus facere clariores. Divites sunt enim, non quia divitias habent, sed quia utuntur illis ad opera justitiæ. Et qui pauperes videntur, eo tamen divites sunt, quia et non egent et non concupiscunt.]

SERM. XII.

first at God's feast;" and the poor next after them were taken care of by God Himself, Lazarus, as it were, in Aaron's, as once in Abraham's bosom, next to the priest in the temple as to the patriarch in heaven; a tithing for the priest, and when this was done, every third year, a tithing for the poor. The withholding of the former was sacrilege, and of the latter, *furtum interpretativum*, say the schools, "interpretative theft," and the casuists to the same purpose, that though our goods be our own, *jure proprietatis*, "by right of propriety," yet they are other men's *jure caritatis*, "by right of charity;" the rich man's barn is the poor man's granary, nay murder too, as we may conclude from the words of the Wise Man, "the poor man's bread is his life,"—and that is sometimes thy dole, on which his life depends,—and then, as there it follows, he that deprives him of it—so doth the unmerciful, as well as the thief—is a murderer. Nay further, that murder one of the deepest dye, a *fratricidium*, like Cain's of Abel his brother, and therefore as that is a *clamans de terra*, "crying for judgment from the ground," so hath this a *clamet ad Deum contra te*, "cry to God against thee." I will add, at least so long as the state of the Jews lasted, it was sacrilege too. Shall we proceed then and ask when the state of the Jews expired did alms-giving expire with it? was charity abrogated with sacrifice? turned out of the world for an antiquated, abolished rite, for a piece of Judaism? The practice of some Christians would persuade men so, that the sword that Christ brought into the world had wounded charity to the heart, that He had left no such custom behind Him to the Churches of God, that Christianity had clutched men's hands, and frozen their hearts into an ἀπολίθωσις, as Arrian[f] calls it, inverted that miracle of Christ's, returned the children of Abraham into stones. Physicians tell us of a disease converting the womb into a firm stone, and the story in Crollius of a λιθοπαιδίον, "a child of a perfect stony substance," is asserted by many others. Now the unhappiness of it is, that the Hebrew רחם that signifies a "womb," by a little varying of the punctuation, signifies "mercy" also, and "bowels of compassion," whereupon the Septuagint instead of ἔλεος have put μητρὰ, instead of "mercy," a "womb;" and alas the same disease hath fallen upon the רחם in that

[Luke xvi. 23.]

[Ecclus. xxxiv. 21.]

[Gen. iv. 10.]

Deut. xv. 9.

[Mat. x. 34.]

Amos i. 11.

[f] [Epictet. Enchirid., lib. i. c. 5. § 3.]

other sense, the bowels of mercy in many Christians are petrified, transubstantiate into stones, pure mine and quarry, and so we ministers, *damnati ad metalla* (that old Roman punishment[g]) condemned to dig in those mines, and by all the daily pains of preaching and exhortation, able to bring forth nothing but such λιθοπαιδία, stones instead of bread. SERM. XII. [Mat. vii. 9.]

But I hope, my brethren, the practice of those some shall not be accepted as authentic evidence against Christ, to defame and dishonour our most glorious profession, whose very style is "brethren," whose livery "charity," and character that "they love one another." I know not how unmerciful and hardhearted the Christian world is now grown in its declination, as covetousness is generally the vice of old age, I am sure it was open-handed enough in its youth, witness that most ancient primitive apostolical institution of the offertory in the Sacrament, that which was so considerable a part of that holy rite that it gave denomination to the whole, the Eucharist styled κοινωνία, "communion," distinctly from this custom of bringing every man out of his store, and communicating to the necessities of the saints, as it is 2 Cor. viii. 4, κοινωνία τῆς διακονίας εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους, "the communion," or "fellowship" as we render it, more fully "the communicativeness," or "liberality of administering to the saints," and is therefore by us rendered "liberality." Many excellent observations might be presented to you on this occasion, necessary for the understanding many places in St. Paul, especially of chap. xi. of 1 Cor., but you will easily forgive me the sparing this pains in this place. Let it suffice that we find in that chapter, that at those holy meetings there was always a table furnished out of the bounty of communicants for a common feast unto all the faithful; the rich might have leave to bring more than his poorer brother, but not to take place by that bounty, not to pretend any propriety to what he had brought, which is the meaning of the ἴδιον δεῖπνον, "every man his own supper," and the προλαμβάνειν ἐν τῷ φαγεῖν, "taking precedence of others in eating," the rich to eat all and the poor none, one to be hungry and the other drunken, the fault which he there found with the Corinthians. Nor did the custom of liberality, [Col. i. 2; iii. 14; John xiii. 35.] 1 Cor. xvi. 3. [1 Cor. xi. 21.]

[g] [Sueton. Calig. i. 27, et Digest., lib. 48. tit. 19. leg. 8. ap. Corp. Jur. Civ.]

SERM. XII.

annexed to the Sacrament in those days, expire or vanish with the Apostles; the practice rather increased than abated among their successors; witness that προσφορὰ[h] or "oblation," first of all the fruits of the season, as an offering of first-fruits; afterwards only ἄρτου καὶ κράματος[i], "of bread and wine mingled with water," which the brethren or faithful, i. e., in the ancient style, the communicants, are said to bring, and present at the altar or table of the Lord, for the furnishing of the table with part, and refreshing the poor with what was left. These are the εἰσφοραὶ, "oblations" in the Constitutions[k], at least one sort of them, one being for the priest, the other for the poor, and again, αἱ εἰς τοὺς δεομένους εὐποιΐαι[l], "the doing good to them that want," the very word in St. Paul εὐποιΐας καὶ κοινωνίας, "to do good and communicate," and τὰ εἰσφερόμενα ἐπὶ προφάσει πενήτων ἑκούσια, "voluntary oblations for the poor." These are contained under his general head of καρποφορίαι, "bringing of fruits," of which he hath a chapter[m], and κυριακαὶ συνεισφορίαι[n], "the Lord's offerings," and ἐλεημοσύνη, "alms," and otherwhere ἑκούσια τοῖς πένησι χορηγούμενα, "voluntary gifts distributed to the poor;" and observable it is from those and other ancient constitutions, that it was a punishment for some men, used in the Church, not to receive them to the offertory who yet were not so great malefactors as to be kept from some other privileges of Christians. This was called κοινωνία χωρὶς προσφορᾶς[o], "communicating without the offertory," frequently in the Ancyran and Nicene councils; and therefore Epiphanius[p], having mentioned the faults for which offenders were excommunicated, as πορνεία, μοιχεία, "fornication, adultery," &c., he adds, προσφορὰς λαμβάνει παρὰ τῶν οὐκ ἀδι-

Heb. xiii. 16.

[h] [Canon. Apost. iii., iv. Concil., tom. i. col. 25, B, C. See Concil. Trull. can. 28; ibid., tom. vi. col. 1154, 1155.]

[i] [See S. Justin M., Apol. i. c. 65. p. 82, D, and Conc. Carth. iii. can. 25. Concil., tom. ii. col. 1181, A.]

[k] [κύριος . . . οὐ δήπου καὶ τῶν εἰσφορῶν ὑμᾶς ἐλευθέρωσεν, ὧν ὀφείλετε τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν, καὶ τῶν εἰς τοὺς δεομένους εὐποιΐῶν. Apost. Const., lib. ii. c. 35. Concilia, tom. i. col. 272.]

[l] [Ibid., c. 25. col. 260.]

[m] [περὶ καρποφοριῶν διατάξεις. Ibid., lib. vii. c. 30. col. 431.]

[n] [μετὰ ποίου φόβου χρὴ τῶν κυριακῶν μετέχειν συνεισφορῶν. Ibid., lib. iv. c. 4. col. 117.]

[o] [χωρὶς προσφορᾶς κοινωνησάτωσαν. Concil. Ancyran., can. viii., ix., &c. Concilia, tom. i. col. 1460; χωρὶς προσφορᾶς κοινωνήσουσι τῷ λαῷ τῶν προσευχῶν. Conc. Nic., can. xi. Concilia, tom. ii. col. 33, D. Hammond misapprehended the sense of προσφορᾶς, which evidently means the Eucharistic Oblation; the penitents spoken of were allowed to take part in the prayers, but excluded from the Holy Communion.]

[p] [S. Epiphan. adv. Hær., lib. iii. t. 2. Op., tom. i. p. 1107, B.]

SERM. XII.

κούντων οὐδὲ παρανομούντων, ἀλλὰ δικαίως βιούντων, "the Church receives not offerings from the injurious," &c., but from just livers, noting that all but the δικαίως βιοῦντες, "those that live justly," were interdicted the privilege of offering or giving to the Corban. Thus in Clemens was not the oblation received from the "unjust publican who exacted" παρὰ τὸ διατεταγμένον, "above what was appointed," and so for executioners, whose oblation being the price of blood was not suffered to come into the Corban, no more than the thirty pieces of silver that Judas took to betray Christ. An excellent consideration for us to meditate on, that the being excluded from the offertory, being denied the privilege of giving alms or being bountiful to the poor, went for a very great punishment; and so sure the duty, a special part of piety and public service of God. And therefore the custom being either neglected or intermitted at Constantinople, St. Chrysostom[q] took care for the restoring it again, and thereupon made that excellent oration upon that subject, where from antiquity he proves the use of the offertory on the Lord's day, and mentions the Corban or treasury, where it was wont to be put.

Mat. xxvii. 6.

I have been the more large on this particular, because it hath in all ages been accounted a prime piece of Christianity,—a special part of divine worship, saith Aquinas[r],—the observation of which is yet, thanks be to God, alive among us, especially if that be true which Pamelius[s] cites out of Honorius, that instead of the ancient oblation of bread and wine, the offering of money was by consent received into the Church, in memory of the pence in Judas' sale. Only it were well if we were a little more alacrious and exact in the performance of the duty, and more care taken in the distribution, especially that that notorious abuse of this most Christian custom, which they say—I hope unjustly—some part of this city is guilty of,

[q] [S. Chrys. Homilia de Eleemosyna, Op., tom. ii. p. 248. The circumstances referred to occurred at Antioch, not Constantinople. See Montfauc. in Homil. ed. Bened. ibid.]

[r] [Ad secundum dicendum, quod triplex est hominis bonum... Tertium est bonum exteriorum rerum, de quo sacrificium offertur Deo, &c.—S. Thom. Aquin. Summa Theol. Secunda Secundæ, Quæst. lxxxv. art. 3. ad 2.]

[s] [Statutum est . . . ut populus pro oblatione farinæ denarios offerrent, pro quibus traditum Dominum recognoscerent, qui tamen denarii in usum pauperum, qui membra sunt Christi, cederent, vel in aliquid quod ad hoc sacrificium pertineret.—Honorius Augustodunensis, Gemma Animæ, de antiquo ritu Missæ, lib. i. c. 66. ap. Bibl. Magn. Patrum, tom. xii. par. i. p. 1026, D, E, Colon. 1618, quoted by Pamelius in S. Cyprian. de Op. et Eleemos., c. 14. not. 33. p. 360. ed. Par. 1593.]

SERM. XII.

in converting this inheritance of the poor into a feast of entertainment for the officers of the Church, may be branded and banished out of ken. It is yet but a sin, which, like some in Aristotle[t], hath never a name, had never yet the honour to be forbidden, if it should chance to live to that age, thrive and prove fit for an *ὀνομαθεσία*, the imposition of a name, let me have the favour to christen it, a new-found sacrilege, a most inhuman at once, and unchristian profanation; and if you want an emblem for it, that ancient piece of Nathan's designing will serve the turn, the rich man feasting on the poor man's ewe lamb, his luxury maintained by the other's blood. It were an admirable work of ecclesiastic discipline, some way or other to bring the Corban in such favour with us that it might prove a bank or storehouse in every parish, able to supply the wants of all; but much better, if we would fall in love with it ourselves, as a way of binding up both the tables of the law into one volume, of ministering both to God and man, by this one mixed act of charity and piety, of mercy and of sacrifice, and so, in the Wise Man's phrase, "to lay up our riches in God's storehouse," without a metaphor. But if it please you not that anybody—though in the resolution it be Christ Himself—should have the disposal of your alms, as charity now-a-days is a pettish wearish[u] thing, ready to startle and pick a quarrel with any thing that comes to meddle with it, then shall I not pursue this design any further. So thou art really and sincerely affected to the setting out of the third year's tithing, thou shalt have my leave to be thine own almoner, have the choice of the particular way of disposing and ordering it thyself. And yet three things there are that I cannot choose but be so pragmatical as to interpose in this business; 1. For the *quando*, "when," this tithe should be set out; let it not be deferred till the will be a making, till death forces it out of our hands, and makes it a *non dat sed projicit*, only a casting over the lading, when the ship is ready to sink, nor yet till our coffers be ready to run over, till a full, abundant provision be made for all that belong to us, for that is to feed the poor like the dogs, only with the orts[v] of the children's table; but as other tithes are paid just

[2Sam. xii. 3, 4.]

[Mat. vi. 20.]

[Mat. xv. 27.]

[t] [Aristot. Eth. Nic., lib. ii. c. 7.]

[u] [Wearish; weak. Johnson. But Richardson more to the point here, malicious, evil, shrewish.]

[v] [Orts; refuse, things thrown away. Johnson.]

SERM. XII.

as the increase comes in, presently after the whole field is reaped, so must the poor man's tithing also; set out, I say then, dedicated to that use, that we may have it by us at hand, told out ready, when the owner calls for it. It was a thing that Antoninus recounts as matter of special joy, and that which he numbers amongst the felicities for which he was beholden to the gods, that he was never asked of any that he thought fit to give to, that he was answered by his almoner, *ὅτι οὐκ ἔστι χρήματα ὅθεν γένηται*[x], "that there was not store at hand to perform his will." A most joyous, comfortable thing, in that heathen emperor's opinion, and yet that that will hardly be attained to, unless we take some such course as this, mentioned *in terminis* by St. Paul, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come;" a weekly provision laid in, and ready *in numerato* for this purpose, that you be never surprised on a sudden, and so disabled to perform this duty. 2. For the *quibus*, I would answer, to all whom Christ hath made our neighbours and brethren, and I know not that any are excluded from this title. But you would then think I were set to solicit against the laws of this realm, and plead the cause of the idle wandering beggar, that most savage, barbarous, unchristian trade among us, set, a man would think, in the streets by the devil, on purpose to pose, and tire, and nonplus men's charity, to dishearten, and weary them out of this Christian duty. No, we have a countermand from the Apostle against these *ἀτακτήσαντες*, "disorderly walkers," that if any "would not labour, neither should he eat," the best alms for them, the seasonablest provision, and charity to such, is the careful execution of laws upon them, to set them every one single in an orb to move in, by that means perhaps to teach them the skill in time to be alms-givers themselves, at least to become fit to be receivers; for such, of all others, is the fixed, stationary, diligent, labouring poor man, whose motion is like that of the trembling sphere, not able to advance any considerable matter in a whole age, be they never so restless, whose hands, with

1 Cor. xvi. 2.

2 Thess. iii. 7. ver. 10.

[x] [*τὸ ὁσάκις ἐβουλήθην ἐπικουρῆσαί τινι πενομένῳ ἢ εἰς ἄλλο τι χρῄζοντι μηδέποτε ἀκοῦσαί με, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστι μοι χρήματα ὅθεν γένηται.*—Antoninus ad Seipsum, lib. i. cap. 17.]

SERM. XII.

all their diligence, cannot give content to the mouth, or yield any thing but stones many times to the poor child that calls for bread. All that I shall interpose for the *quibus* shall be this, that seeing a "do good to all," is now sent into the world by Christ, and that but little restrained in any Christian kingdom, by an "especially to the household of saints," —all Christians being such,—and seeing again, no man hath hands or store to feed every mouth that gapes in a kingdom, or particularly in this populous city, we may do well to take that course that we use in composing other difficulties, *referatur ad sortem*, let the lot decide the main of the controversy, and reserving somewhat for the public, somewhat for the stranger, somewhat for common calamities, somewhat as it were for the universal motion of the whole body, somewhat for eccentrics; let the place whereon our lot hath cast us be the principal orb for our charity to move in, the special diocese for our visitation. And when that is done, and yet, as it is in the parable, there be still room, store left for others also, then to enlarge as far as we can round about us, as motion beginning at the centre diffuses itself uniformly, sends out its influence and shakes every part to the circumference; and happy that man who hath the longest arm, whose charity can thus reach farthest. The third thing is that my text obliges me to, the how much out of every man's revenues may go for the poor man's due, which brings me to the second particular, the πόσον here mentioned in these words, "tithing all the tithes of thy increase the third year."

[Mat. vii. 9.]

[Gal. vi. 10.]

[Luke xiv. 22.]

That there was a πόσον defined by God to the Jews' charity, a proportion for every man, not which they might not exceed, —for there were other ways of vent for their charity mentioned, beside this,—but which no man was to go under, is manifest by the text, and chap. xiv. of this book; the proportion, you see, a tithe, or tenth part of all the increase, not yearly, but only every third year, to raise a bank, as it were, for the maintenance of the poor, till that year came about again. This if we would dissolve into a yearly rate, and so discern the Jewish πόσον more perfectly, it is equivalent to a thirtieth part every year; the Jew whose yearly revenue amounted to thirty shekels, was every third year to pay three of them to the use of the poor, that is, in effect, one for every year,

the triennial tenth being all one with an annual thirtieth: the account is clear, and no man but hath arithmetic enough to conclude, that a thirtieth part is the third part of a tenth, and so a tenth every third year is all one with a thirtieth every year. I shall insist on this no further than to tell you that God's judgment in this affair is worth observing, that alms-giving or mercifulness being a dictate of nature, but that like other such laws, given only in general terms, for the ὅτι, but not so as to descend to particular cases. It pleased God to His people the Jews, to express His judgment at that time, in that state, for the πόσον, how much was by law to be laid aside for use out of every one's increase.

Now[x] if I should press this practice of the Jews as matter of obligation or prescription to Christians, that you are not in conscience to do less than the Jews were bound to do, every man to set apart a thirtieth of his yearly revenue or increase, for the use of the poor brethren, I know not how you would take it; many would startle at the news of the doctrine, many more when they came to the practice of it, many quarrels you would have against it; he that were merciful already would think his gift would become a debt, his bounty duty, and so be wronged and robbed of the renown of his charity by this doctrine; and the covetous, that were not inclined to giving at all, would complain that this were a new kind of ghostly stealth, a way of robbing him out of the pulpit, of burdening his conscience and lightening his bags, and both join in the indictment of it for a Judaical, antiquated doctrine, that hath nothing to do with Christians. And therefore to do no more than I shall justify from the principles of the Gospel, I shall confess unto you that this precept, as it was given to the Jews, is not obliging unto Christians, and therefore I have not told you it was, but only gave you to consider what God's judgment was for the πόσον to His own people. Only by way of application to ourselves, give me leave to add these four things, which I shall deliver in as many propositions; 1. That mercifulness, or charity, or giving alms, is no part of the ceremonial law, which is pro-

[x] [See this further enlarged on in the author's Practical Catechism, lib. iii. sect. 1.]

SERM. XII.

perly Judaism, but of the eternal law of reason and nature, part of the oath or Sacrament that is given us when the *fiat homo* is first pronounced to us, a ray of God's mercifulness infused into us with our human nature; in a word, that mercifulness is all one with humanity, a precept of the nature, the God, the soul we carry about with us. 2. That being so, it comes within the compass of those laws, that Christ came οὐ καταλῦσαι, ἀλλὰ πληρῶσαι, "not to destroy but to fulfil," i. e., as the fathers before St. Augustine[y] generally interpreted it, to improve it, set it higher than it was before, require more of Christians than ever was exacted of the Jews or heathens by the law of Moses or of nature. Thus Irenæus[z], mentioning Christ's improvement of the law, *pro eo quod est, Non mœchaberis, nec concupiscere præcepit,* "for, Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not look to lust," he adds, *pro eo quod est decumare, omnia quæ sunt pauperibus dividere,* "instead of tithing"—this third year's tithing —"thou shalt divide all thou hast to the poor," give them some plentiful part of it. And this, saith he, an act of Christ, *non solventis, sed adimplentis, extendentis, dilatantis legem,* "not loosing, but filling up, extending, dilating the law." And St. Hierome[a], on 2 Cor. viii. 20, "avoiding this that no man should blame us," explains it thus, "lest any should say, how did Christ fill up or fulfil the Law," *cum videamus Christianos non tantam eleemosynam facere quantam fieri in lege præceptum est,* "when we see Christians not give so much alms as was by the law of Moses prescribed to be given." 3. That there were among the Jews two sorts of mercifulness, the first called literally righteousness, and by the Septuagint, when it belongs to works of mercy, is rendered sometimes δικαιοσύνη, "righteousness," sometimes ἐλεημοσύνη, "mercy," and this is that mercifulness that Moses' law required of the Jews, and so was part of their righteous-

[Mat. v. 17.]

y [See note e in the Practical Catechism, p. 110.]

z [Et hoc autem quod præcepit, non solum vetitis a lege sed etiam a concupiscentiis eorum abstinere, non contrarium est, quemadmodum prædiximus, neque solventis legem, sed] adimplentis et extendentis et dilatantis. . . . Et propter hoc Dominus pro eo quod est *Non mœchaberis,* nec concupiscere præcepit, et pro eo quod est, *Non occides,* neque irasci quidem, et pro eo quod est decimare, omnia quæ sunt pauperibus dividere. S. Iren.] lib. iv. cap. 27. [p. 313.]

a [Ne quis dicat, quomodo Christus legem implevit, &c. Comment. Pelagii (S. Hieron. ascript.) in Epist. ii. ad Cor. viii. 20. inter Op. S. Hieron., tom. ix. col. 969.]

ness, he was a breaker of the law that did neglect it, and so *opera justitiæ* in Lactantius[b], "the works of righteousness," meaning works of charity, by that phrase. The second was mercy, i. e., a higher degree of charity, rather benignity, mercifulness, being full of good works, and this was more than their law exacted, and was therefore styled goodness, as that was more than righteousness. 4. That by force of the second proposition, and by the tenure of evangelical perfection that Christ commended to His disciples, this highest degree of mercifulness among the Jews is now the Christian's task, and that to him that will be perfect, yet in a higher degree, not only that degree which the law required of the Jew, a little raised and improved by us, for that will be but the Christian's righteousness, but even the benignity of the Jews, "abundance of mercy," improved and enlarged by us also. And from these premises if I may in the name of God take boldness to infer my conclusion, it can be no other than this; that the proportion to be observed by the Christian alms-giver, to speak at the least, must be more in any reason than the thirtieth part of his revenue or increase; the thirtieth is but equivalent to the third year's tithing of the Jews, which was their righteousness, that which they were bound to do by the law; the Pharisee did as much, and Christ tells us, "that except our righteousness," δικαιοσύνη ὑμῶν, the very word that signifies the legal alms-giving many times in the Bible, and who knows but it may do so here—of this there is no doubt, but it belongs to charity, or duty towards men in its latitude, of which alms-giving is one most special part, and—"except our righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees we shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven," the text on which that heavenly gospel-sermon was preached upon the mount. If we have any design toward evangelical perfection, toward the Christian pitch, the abundance of goodness and mercifulness, as that is improved by Christianity, then this third year's tithing will prove but a beggarly, thin proportion, that that a Jew, if he were a religious one, would have been ashamed of. But be our alms never so moderate, if a door-keeper's place will serve our turn, to be one of the *nethinim*,

[Mat. v. 20.]

[b] [See above, p. 243, note e.]

SERM. XII.

of the meanest rank in the kingdom of heaven, yet still we must exceed that proportion of the Jews' righteousness, their third year's tithe, that they were bound to, or else we are strangely mistaken in Christianity. I am unwilling to descend to the arraigning, or indicting, or so much as examining any man here for the omissions of his former life in this kind; my humble lowliest request is, that you will do it yourselves, and if either through ignorance you have not reckoned of it as a duty, or through desire to thrive in the world you have omitted to practise it heretofore, you will now at last at this instance, take it into your consideration, and remember that there is such a thing as charity —a pale, wan, despised creature—commended to Christians by Christ; not to suffer it any longer to go for one of those magicians' serpents, which faith, like Moses' rod, is appointed to devour; if it do, know that this rod is the verier serpent of the two; and for the quickening that resolution in you, I shall proceed unto the third particular, the ὅτι δεῖ, to consider it as a duty, and so to make an end of my first general.

In this slothful but confident age of the world, it were admirably worth one's pains to instruct men what duty is, now under the gospel, what the very word signifies in a Christian nomenclature. There are so many descants of fantastical brains on that plain song of the Apostles, "We are not under law but under grace," that it is scarce agreed on among Christians what it is to be a Christian, nothing more unresolved than what it is that is now required under the second covenant, as necessary to salvation. One thinks that the believing all fundamentals is the ἓν ἀναγκαῖον, the "only qualification" for a Christian, and what hath duty to do with that? Another makes the gospel consist all of promises of what shall be wrought in us and on us by Christ, and so gives an absolute *supersedeas* for duty, as a legal out-dated thing, that is utterly antiquated by grace. Another contents himself with purposes and resolutions, thin, airy inclinations to duty, and is utterly indifferent for any performance, doubts not but to pass for a Christian, as regenerate as St. Paul, when he wrote to the Romans, though he never do the good that he resolves, live and die carnal and captived

[Rom. vi. 14.]

Rom. vii. 14, seq.

and sold under sin. A fourth dissolves all to a new-found faith. A full persuasion, an absolute assurance, that he is one of God's elect, is abundantly sufficient to estate himself in that number, a piece of magic or conjuring, that will help any man to heaven that will but fancy it, enrol their names in the book of life, in those sacred eternal diptychs, by dreaming only that they are there already. Others there are that seem kinder unto duty, are content to allow Christ some return of performances for all His sufferings, yet you see in the gospel, it is in one but the patience of hearing Him preach, a "Lord, Thou hast taught in our streets;" "we have heard so many sermons" passes for a sufficient pretension to heaven; in another, the communicating at His table, "We have eat and drank in Thy presence," a sufficient *viaticum* for that long journey, a charm or amulet against fear or danger; in a third, the diligence of a bended knee, or solemn look of formal, outside worship, must be taken in commutation for all other duty, and all this while religion is brought up in the gentleman's trade, good clothes and idleness, or of the lilies of the field, *vestiri, et non laborare*, "to be clothed, and not labour;" duty is too mechanical a thing, the shop or the plough, the work of faith or labour of love, are things too vile, too sordid for them to stoop to; heaven will be had without such solicitors. Shall I instance in one particular more? that Satan may be sure that duty shall never rescue any prey out of his hands, one thing you may observe, that most men never come to treat with it, to look after, to consider any such thing, till indeed the "time comes that no man worketh," till the "tokens be out upon them," till the "cry comes, that the bridegroom is ready to enter," that "judgment is at the door," and then there is such a running about for oil, as if it were for extreme unction, and that a sacrament to confer all grace *ex opere operato* on him that hath scarce life enough to discern that he received it; the soul sleeps in its tenement as long as its lease lasteth, and when it is expired, then it rouseth, and makes as if it would get to work; the Christian thinks not of action, of duty, of good works, of any thing whilst life and health lasteth, but then the summons of death wakes him, and the prayers which he can repeat while his clothes are putting off shall charm him, like opium, for a quiet sleep.

[Luke xiii. 26.]

[Ibid.]

[Luke xii. 27.]

SERM. XII.

Thus doth a death-bed repentance, a death-bed charity, a parting with sins and wealth, when we can hold them no longer, look as big in the calendars of saints, stand as solemnly and demurely in our diptychs as judgment and mercy and faith, that have "borne the heat and burden of the day;" our hearts are hardened, while it is to-day, against all the invasion of law or gospel, judgments or mercies, threats or promises, all Christ's methods and stratagems of grace, and just at the close of the evening, the shutting in of night, we give out that the thunderbolt hath converted us, the fever came with its fiery chariot, and hurried us up to heaven; *surdus et mutus testamentum facit,* quite against Justinian's rule[c]; he that hath sent out most of his senses before him, and retains but the last glimmering of life, is allowed to make his will and reverse all former acts by that one final. Satan hath all the man hath to give, under hand and seal, all his life-time, the spring especially and verdure of his age, the "children pass through the fire to Moloch," and just as he is a dropping out of the world, he makes signs of cancelling that will, and by a dumb act of revocation bequeaths his soul to God, and his executor must see it paid among other legacies; and all this passes for legal in the court, and none of the canons against the ancient *clinici* can be heard against them; the greatest wound to duty, that ever yet it met with among Christians. Thus do our vain fancies and vainer hopes join to supplant duty and good works, and dismiss them out of the Church; and if all or any of this be orthodox divinity, then sure the duty of alms-giving will prove a suspected phrase, *hæretici characteris,* of an heretical stamp, and then I am fallen on a thankless argument, which yet I must not retract or repent of, but in the name of God and St. Paul, "in this way that these men call heresy," beseech and conjure you to "worship the God of your fathers." For this purpose shall I make my address to you in Daniel's words, "Break off your sins by righteousness, and your iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor," righteousness and mercy, the two degrees of alms-giving that I told you of; I hope that will not be suspected, when he speaks it. Shall I tell you what duty is, what is now required of a Christian, and that

[Mat. xxiii. 23.]

[Jer. xxxii. 35.]

[Acts xxiv. 14.]

Dan. iv. 27.

[c] [Digest., lib. 28. tit. i. leg. 6; ap. Corp. Jur. Civ.]

SERM. XII.

in the prophet Micah's phrase, "And now what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God," justice and mercy, the two degrees of alms-giving again that I told you of, and I hope it will not prove offensive when he speaks it. Shall I tell you of a new religion, and yet that a pure one, and the same an old religion, and yet that an undefiled,—for so the beloved disciple calls this duty of charity, a "new commandment," and an "old commandment,"—it shall be in St. James his words, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widow in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Shall I tell you in one word, that though heaven be given us freely, yet alms-giving is the consideration mentioned in the conveyance, that men are acknowledged the blessed of God, and called to heaven, upon the performance of this duty; that although it pretend not to any merit, either *ex congruo* or *condigno*, yet it is a duty most acceptable in the sight of God, that alms-giving is mentioned when assurance is left out, charity crowned when confidence is rejected? I love not to be either magisterial or quarrelsome, but to speak the "words of truth and sobriety," to learn, and if it be possible to "have peace with all men;" only give me leave to read you a few words that St. Matthew transcribed from the mouth of Christ, "Then shall the King say to them on His right hand"—who should the King be but Christ Himself?—"Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungred and ye gave Me meat." Tell me in the name of truth and peace, who now were they for whom the kingdom was prepared from the foundation of the world; who were there the objects of that great doomsday election, His *Venite benedicti?* If Christ do not tell you neither do I, the text is of age, let it speak for itself; "For I was an hungred and ye gave Me meat." If all this will justify the doctrine and make this text Christian, persuade your judgments that charity may be the queen of heaven—*maxima autem harum caritas*, "the greatest of these is charity"—without affront or injury done to any other grace. I hope it will be seasonable for your practice also, as it hath

Micah vi. 8.

1 John ii. [7, 8.]

Jas. i. 27.

Mat. xxv. [34,] 35.

[1 Cor. xiii. ult.]

SERM. XII.

been for your meditation, become your hands as well as it doth now your ears.

And to infuse some life, some alacriousness into you for that purpose, I shall descend to the more sensitive, quickening, enlivening part of this text, the benefit arising from the performance of this duty, *dicas coram Domino*, "then thou shalt" or mayest "say before the Lord thy God." And in that I promised you two things; 1. to shew you *in thesi*, that confidence or claiming any thing at God's hands, must take its rise from duty in performance; 2. *in hypothesi*, to give you the connection betwixt this confidence and this performance, claiming of temporal plenty upon giving of alms.

1. *In thesi;* that confidence or claiming any thing at God's hands must take its rise from duty in performance.

If there be any doubt of the truth of this, I shall give you but one ground of proof, which I think will be demonstrative, and it is that that will easily be understood, I am sure, I hope as easily consented to; that all the promises of God, even of Christ in the gospel, are conditional promises, not personal, for the law descends not to particular persons,—and in this the gospel is a law too, *νόμος πίστεως*, "the law of faith,"— nor absolute, as that signifies irrespective or exclusive of qualifications or demeanour, for that is all one with personal, and if either of those were true, then would Christ be what He renounces, a *προσωπολήπτης*, "an accepter" of persons and individual entities, and so the mercies of heaven belong to Saul the persecutor as truly as Paul the Apostle, Saul the injurious as Paul the abundant labourer, Saul the blasphemer as Paul the martyr. It remains then that they be conditional promises, and so they are explicitly, for the most part, the condition named and specified, "Come out and be you separate, and touch not the unholy thing;" a condition you see set foremost in the indenture, and then, "I will receive you," and therefore most logically infers the Apostle in the next word, the beginning of chap. vii., "Having therefore these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Had the promises been of any other sort but the *ἐπαγγελίας ταύτας*, these i. e. conditional promises, the Apostle's illation of so much duty, cleansing and perfecting, had been utterly

[Rom. iii. 27.]

[Acts x. 34.]

2Cor.vi.17.

unconclusive, if not impertinent. So Rom. viii. 28, "All things work together for good;" to whom? "to them that love God," κατὰ πρόθεσιν κλητοῖς οὖσι, "to them that are called according to purpose;" the word "called" a noun in that place, not a participle, noting a real, not only intentional passion, those that are wrought upon by God's call, and are now in the catalogue of the ἀγαπῶντες τὸν Θεὸν, "the lovers of God," and that is the condition in the subject; and then to them that are thus qualified belongs that chain of mercies, predestination, vocation to a conformity with Christ, justification, glorification, immediately ensuing. You see the proof of my ground by a taste or two. Now what condition this is that is thus prefixed to gospel promises, that is not obscure neither. Not absolute, exact, never sinning, perfect obedience, that was the condition of the first covenant made in paradise, when there was ability to perform it, but a condition proportioned to our state, sincerity in lieu of perfection, repentance in exchange for innocence, evangelical instead of legal righteousness, believing in the heart, i. e., cordial obedience to the whole law of Christ, impartial without hypocrisy or indulgence in any known sin, persevering and constant without apostacy or final defection, and at last humble without boasting. If you will come yet nearer to a full sight of it, sometimes regeneration or new life is said to be the condition, "Except you be born again you can in no wise enter." "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." Sometimes "holiness, without which *nemo Deum*, no man shall see the Lord:" sometimes repentance in gross, "nay, but except you repent;" sometimes in the retail, repentance divided into its parts, "he that confesseth and forsaketh shall have mercy;" sometimes repentance alone, "but now commands all men every where to repent," as if all duty were contained in that; sometimes in conjunction with faith, "repent you and believe the gospel;" sometimes faith, sometimes love, sometimes self-denial, sometimes mercifulness, sometimes hope, but that an ἐλπίδα ταύτην, a "this hope" that sets us a purifying; every one of these, when you meet them single, goes for the only necessary, the adequate condition of the gospel, to teach you to take them up all as you find them, leave never an one neglected or despised,

[Jas. iii. 17.]

[John iii. 3, 5.]

[Gal. vi. 16.]

[Heb. xii. 34.]

[Luke xiii. 3, 5.]

[Prov. xxviii. 13.]

[Acts xvii. 30.]

[Mark i. 15.]

[John iii. 35; xiii. 35; Mat. xvi. 24; Luke x. 37; Rom. viii. 24.]

[1 John iii. 3.]

SERM. XII.

lest that be the betraying of all the rest, but make up one jewel of these so many lesser gems, one body of these so many limbs, one recipe compounded of so many ingredients, which you may superscribe *παμφάρμακον, catholicon,* or the whole duty of man. From this general proposition, without the aid of any assumption, we may conclude demonstratively enough, promises of the gospel are conditional promises, therefore all confidence must take rise from duty. Duty is the performance of that condition, and to be confident without that is to conclude without premises, and consequently to claim justification or pardon of sins, before sanctification be begun in the heart, to challenge right to heaven before repentance be rooted on earth, to make faith the first grace and yet define that assurance of salvation, to apply the merits of Christ to ourselves the first thing we do, and reckon of charity, good works, duty, as fruits and effects, to be produced at leisure when that faith comes to virility and strength of fructifying. What is all or any of this but to charge God of perjury, to tell Him that impenitents have right to heaven, which He swears have not, or to forge a new lease of heaven, and put it upon Christ? the calmest style I can speak in is, that it is the believing of a lie, and so not faith but folly, an easy cheatableness of heart, and not confidence, but presumption. Hope a man may, without actual performance of duty, because he may amend hereafter, though he do not now, and so that possibility and that futurity may be ground of hope; but then this hope must set us presently upon performance, "He that hath this hope purifies himself," or else it is not that grace of hope, but an *αὐθάδεια* a "youthful daringness" of soul, a tumor, a disease, a tympany of hope, and if it swell further than it purge, if it put on confidence before holiness, this hope may be interpreted desperation, a hope that maketh ashamed, an utter destitution of that hope which must bestead a Christian. O let us be sure then, our confidence, our claims to heaven, improve not above their proportion, that we preserve this symmetry of the parts of grace; that our hope be but commensurate to our sincerity, our daringness to our duty. A double confidence there is *pro statu,* and absolute; *pro statu* when upon survey of my present constitution of soul I claim right in Christ's promises for the present, and doubt not but

SERM. XII.

I shall be blessed if I be found so doing: absolute, when at the end of life and shutting in of the day, I am able to make up my reckonings with St. Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness," a crown of felicity. I have done what I had to do, and now λοιπὸν ἀπόκειται, there is nothing behind but to receive my pay. [2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.]

I have been too long upon the general consideration of the connection between confidence and duty; if it were an extravagance, I hope it was a pardonable one; I descend with speed to the hypothesis, the connection betwixt this confidence and this performance, claiming of temporal plenty upon giving of alms, my last particular. And that I shall give you clearly in this one proposition; that alms-giving or mercifulness was never the wasting or lessening of any man's estate to himself or his posterity, but rather the increasing of it. If I have delivered a new doctrine that will not presently be believed, an *unusquisque non potest capere*, such as every auditor will not consent to, I doubt not but there be plain texts of Scripture, more than one, which will assure any Christian of the truth of it. Consider them at your leisure, Psalm xli. 1, 2; Psalm cxii., all to this purpose, Prov. xi. 25, and xii. 9, and xix. 17, and xxviii. 27. Add to these the words of Christ, Mark x. 30, which though more generally delivered of any kind of parting with possessions for Christ's sake, are applied by St. Hierome[d] to the words of Solomon, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth," *quia centuplum accipient in hoc tempore*, "because," saith he, "they receive an hundred-fold in this world." And that no man may have any scruple to interpose, it is set in as large and comprehensive a style as the art, or covetous, scrupulous wit of man could contrive for his own security; "there is no man who shall not. . ." [Mat. xix. 11.] Prov. xi. 24.

All which being put together must, to my understanding, make it as clear to any that acknowledges these for Scripture, as if the בת קול "daughter of voice" were come back into the world again, and God should call to a man out of heaven by name, bid him relieve that poor man, and he

[d] [Comment. in Prov. S. Hieron. ascript. lib. ii. ad loc. Op., tom. v. col. 547, ed. Ben.]

SERM. XII.

should never be the poorer for it. It is not now to be expected of me in conscience, having produced this kind of proof, the express texts of Scripture, to add any second to it; I might else further evidence it from examples, not such as Moschus's[e] λειμωνάριον will furnish you with, for I know not of what authority they are; nor yet from St. Hierome's observation, who is said to have turned over histories on purpose, and never found any merciful man which met not with some signal blessing in this world as the reward of that virtue; but even by appealing to yourselves, and challenging any man here present to bring but one instance of a prudent alms-giver, that hath yearly or weekly consecrated some considerable part of his revenue or increase to that use, and can say that he ever found any real miss of that, any more than of the blood let out in a pleurisy; nay, if he have done it constantly and sincerely from the one true principle, compliance with the command and example of God, let him speak his conscience, if he do not think that all the rest hath thrived better than that, as phlebotomy hath saved many men's lives, letting out some ounces of blood been the securing of the whole mass, that it hath a secret blessing influence, a vital auspicious infection upon the remainder, by this art of consecrating our estates, entitling God to the fence and safeguard of them, as of His temples and altars, that thieves, and oppressors, and devils conceive a reverence due to them, and a kind of sacrilege to approach or purloin from them, as they that put the crown into their entail do thereby secure it to the right heir, that it can never be cut off. The poor widow of Sarepta, what a strange trial she made of this truth! when the last of her store was fetched out to make the funeral feast for herself and family, that they might eat and die, that very last cake, that all that was left, she gives to Elijah in his distress, and this is so far from ruining her, that it brought a blessing on her barrel and her cruse, that she and all hers were not able to exhaust; I might add the poor widow in the Gospel, that, if we may believe Christ, "cast in all that she had into the corban, even her whole substance;" the Christians that "sold all and laid

[1 Kings xvii.]

[Mark xii. 44.]

[e] [Joan. Moschi Ebirati Pratum Spirituale ap. Bibl. Patr. Græc., tom. ii. p. 1055, &c. Par. 1624.]

it at the Apostles' feet," and yet we never read of any of these that brought himself to distress by this means. But these are *ex abundanti*, more than is required for the vouching of my present proposition, and of a higher strain than what I design for your imitation. SERM. XII.

It is time that I begin to retire, and wind up with some application which you cannot imagine should be any other, after all this preparation, but a "go and do thou likewise." And if you can but believe this one thing, that I have brought many witnesses from heaven to testify that your goodness shall not impair your plenty, that your store shall never be lessened by so giving, I doubt not but you will be as forward to go as any man to have you. The only hold-back is the affection and passionate love that we bear to our wealth, that lust or sensuality of the eye, as the Apostle calls it. It is ordinarily observed of young men and dissolute, that they have many times a great aptness and ingeniousness, and withal patience, to any speculative knowledge, the mathematics[f] or any such the abstrusest studies, but for moral precepts, rules of good life, they will not be digested; and, my brethren, give me leave to tell you in the spirit of meekness, that the like in another respect is observed of this auditory, any thing wherein their wealth is not concerned is most readily entertained, none more attentive ingenious auditors; but when their profit is entrenched on, their beloved golden idol, of which I may say with Moses, "Oh, this people have committed a great sin, made them gods of gold," when this, I say, begins to be in danger, as the silver shrines at St. Paul's preaching, then, as it follows in that place, the whole city is filled with confusion: like that young man in the Gospel that would do any thing that Christ would require, "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" So far as that Jesus loved him, when He beheld him; yet when Christ proceeds to the ἕν σοὶ ὑστερεῖ, "one thing is wanting to thee, go sell, give to the poor;" then follows the στυγνάσας and λυπούμενος, "he went away sad and sorrowful," sighing and groaning, as if he had been to part with blood and bowels; and this is the ground of Christ's most considerable observation, πῶς δύσκολον, "how hard," and

[Luke x. 37.]

[1 John ii. 16.]

[Exod. xxxii. 31.]

Acts xix. [27.]

[Mark x. 17.]

[ver. 21.]

[ver. 22.]

[ver. 24, 27

[f] [Arist. Eth. Nic., lib. vi. c. 8.]

SERM. XII.

πῶς ἀδύνατον, "how impossible, is it for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven," for a worldly-minded man to be a Christian. Could you but reduce into order this one mighty exorbitant humour, purge out this χολὴ τῆς πικρίας, as St. Peter calls it, this "overflowing of the gall," this choler and bitterness, that lies caked upon the soul, that σύνδεσμος ἀδικίας, as he goes on in the aggravating of covetousness, we english it "band of iniquity," but it signifies a complication of wickedness bound up all in one volume, mingled into one *hypostasis*, this legion of earthly devils that come out of the tombs to enter into thee, and there continue crying and cutting thee with stones; I should then proceed with some heart and spirit, and tell you that, that every man knows but such demoniacs, that alms-giving is in itself a thing that any man living, if he have but the relics of unregenerate nature, and the notion of a deity about him, would take pleasure in it were he but satisfied of this one scruple, that it would not hinder his thriving in the world. "It is more blessed to give than to receive," is the apophthegm of St. Paul quoted from Christ, though it be not rehearsed in the Gospel; and Clemens[g] hath turned it into a maxim, μετάδοσις μακάριον, οὐ κτῆσις δείκνυσι, "it is giving, not possessing, that signifies a man to be happy," and this happiness the highest and most divine sort of happiness, "it is a blessed thing to give." And of the same inclination in the worst of you I will no more doubt than I do of your being men, of your having human souls about you, could you be but fortified against this one terror, were but this one trembling spirit exorcised and cast out, this apprehension of impairing your estates by that means. Now of this an ordinary Jew makes so little doubt, merely upon authority of the places of the Old Testament which I cited, that he may read thee a lecture of faith in this particular. Paulus Fagius[h] assures me of the modern Jews, who have not been observed to be over liberal, that they still observe the payment of the poor man's tithe, merely out of design to enrich themselves by that means, and tells us of a proverb of Rabbi Akiba[i], מעשרות סיג לעושר, "tithes are the hedges to our

[Acts viii. 23.]

[Acts xx. 35.]

[g] [See note p. 39.]

[h] [Fagius in Deut. xiv. 23, apud Crit. Sacr. p. 94. (tom. ii.)]

[i] Perk Avot. [פרקי אבות Capitula Patrum in Lat. ver., et scholiisque illustrat. per Paulum Fagium, c. 3. p. 56. Isnæ. 1541.]

riches," and on the contrary, that[k] there be seven kinds of judgments that come upon the world for seven prevarications, and the first is famine upon not tithing; and the second again, another kind of famine upon another not tithing, and that second plainly belongs to the poor man's tithing, when, as it follows[l], "some are full and others are famished;" and the third is a plague upon "not obeying the law concerning the fruits of the Sabbatical year," which you know were to be left to the poor. And again, that there are four seasons wherein the plague was wont to rage especially, in the fourth year upon the non-payment of the poor man's tithe the third year, or the seventh upon the like default in the sixth, in the end of the seventh upon default concerning the seventh year's fruits that were to be free and common, and the last yearly, in the close of the feast of tabernacles, upon the "robbing of the poor of those gifts that at that time were left unto them," the gleanings of the harvest and vintage[m], the corners of the field, the fallings, &c. Add to this one place more of Rabbi Bechai[n]; "Though," saith he, "it be unlawful to prove or tempt the Lord, for a man must not say 'I will perform such a commandment to the end I may prosper in riches,' yet there is an exception for payment of tithes and works of mercy," intimating that on the performance of this duty we may expect even miracles to make us rich, and set to that performance on contemplation and confidence of that promise. And it is strange that we Christians should find more difficulty in believing this than the griping reprobated Jews; strange, that all those books of Scripture should be grown apocryphal just since the minute that I cited those testimonies out of them. This I am resolved on, it is want of belief and nothing else that keeps men from the practice of this duty, whatsoever it is in other sins we may believe aright and yet do contrary,—our understanding hath not such a controlling power over the will as some imagine,—yet in this particular this cannot be pretended; could this one mountain be removed, the lessening of our wealth that alms-giving is accused of, could this one scandal to flesh and blood be kicked out of the way, there is no other devil would take the unmerciful man's part, no other

Mal. iii. 10; Prov. iii. [9,] 10.

[k] Ibid., c. 5. [p. 104.]
[l] Ibid., p. 105.
[m] Ibid., p. 109, 110.
[n] In Deuter. xxvi.

SERM. XII.

temptation molest the alms-giver. And how unjust a thing this is, how quite contrary to the practice at all other sermons, I appeal to yourselves. At other times the doctrine raised from any Scripture is easily digested, but all the demur is about the practical inference; but here when all is done, the truth of the doctrine still, "that we shall not be the poorer for alms-giving," is that that can never go down with us, lies still crude unconcocted in our stomachs; a strange prepossession of worldly hearts, a *petitio principii* that no artist would endure for us. I must not be so unchristian, whatsoever you mean to be, as to think there is need of any further demonstration of it, after so many plain places of Scripture have been produced; let me only tell you that you have no more evidence for the truth of Christ's coming into the world, for all the fundamentals of your faith, on which you are content your salvation should depend, than such as I have given you for your security in this point. Do not now make a mockery at this doctrine, and either with the Jew in Cedrenus[o], or the Christian in Palladius, throw away all you have at one largess to see whether God will gather it up for you again, but set soberly and solemnly about the duty, in the fear of God and compliance with His will, and in bowels of compassion to thy

[o] [ἐπὶ τούτου δὲ ἄνθρωπός τις ἐγνωρίζετο ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ, πλούσιος καὶ ἀνελεήμων, ὃς ἐλθὼν πρός τινα τῶν διδασκάλων καὶ ἀναπτύξας τὴν σοφίαν Σολομῶντος, εὗρεν εὐθύς· ὁ ἐλεῶν πτωχὸν, δανείζει Θεῷ· καὶ εἰς ἑαυτὸν γενόμενος, καὶ κατανυγεὶς, ἀπελθὼν πέπρακε πάντα, καὶ διένειμε πτωχοῖς, μηδὲν ἑαυτῷ καταλείψας πλὴν νομισμάτων δύο· καὶ πτωχεύσας πάνυ, καὶ ὑπὸ μηδενὸς ἐκ θείας δοκιμασίας ἐλεούμενος, ὕστερον ἐν ἑαυτῷ λέγει μικροψυχήσας· ἀπελεύσομαι ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ καὶ διακρινοῦμαι τῷ Θεῷ μου ὅτι ἐπλάνησέ με διασκορπίσαι τὰ ὑπάρχοντά μου· πορευομένου δὲ αὐτοῦ, εἶδεν ἄνδρας δύο μαχομένους πρὸς ἀλλήλους εὑρόντας λίθον τίμιον· καὶ φησὶ πρὸς αὐτοὺς, ἵνα τὶ, ἄδελφοι, μάχεσθε; δότε μοι αὐτὸν, καὶ λάβετε νομίσματα δύο· τῶν δὲ μετὰ χαρᾶς τοῦτον παρασχόντων, οὐ γὰρ ᾔδεσαν τοῦ λίθου τὸ ὑπερτίμιον, ἀπῆλθεν εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ, τὸν λίθον ἐπιφερόμενος· καὶ δείξας αὐτὸν χρυσοχόῳ παραχρῆμα τὸν λίθον ἐκεῖνος ἰδὼν, ἀναστὰς προσεκύνησε· καὶ ἔκθαμβος γενόμενος ἐπυνθάνετο ποῦ τὸν πολύτιμον, λέγων, καὶ θεῖον λίθον τοῦτον εὗρες; ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἔτη τρία σήμερον Ἱερουσαλὴμ δονεῖται καὶ ἀκαταστατεῖ διὰ τὸν περιβόητον λίθον τοῦτον· παὶ ἀπελθὼν, δὸς αὐτὸν τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ καὶ σφόδρα πλουτήσεις· τοῦ δὲ ἀπερχομένου, ἄγγελος Κυρίου εἶπε πρὸς τὸν ἀρχιερέα· νῦν ἐλεύσεται ἄνθρωπος πρός σε τὸν ἀπολεσθέντα πολυθρύλλητον λίθον ἐκ τῆς διπλοΐδος Ἀαρὼν τοῦ ἀρχιερέως ἔχων· λαβὼν αὐτὸν, δὸς τῷ ἐνέγκαντι αὐτὸν, χρυσίον πολὺ καὶ ἀργύριον· ἅμα δὲ καὶ ῥαπίσας μετρίως, εἰπέ· μὴ δίσταζε ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου, μηδὲ ἀπίστει τῷ διὰ τῆς γραφῆς λέγοντι· ὁ ἐλεῶν πτωχὸν, δανείζει Θεῷ· ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι ἐξεπλήρωσά σοι πολλαπλασίονα ὑπὲρ ὧν ἐδάνεισάς μοι· καὶ εἰ πιστεύεις λήψῃ καὶ ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι πλοῦτον ἀνυπέρβλητον· καὶ ὁ μὲν ἀρχιερεὺς τὰ διατεταγμένα πάντα πεποίηκε πρὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον καὶ λελάληκεν· ὁ δὲ ἀκούσας καὶ ἔντρομος γενόμενος, πάντα ἐάσας ἐν τῷ ναῷ ἐξῆλθεν, εὐχαριστῶν, καὶ πιστεύων Κυρίῳ, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν τῇ θείᾳ γραφῇ διηγορευμένα. —Cedreni Hist. Compend., tom. i. p. 109.]

poor brethren that stand in need of thy comfort, those emeralds and jacinths that Macarius[p] persuaded the rich virgin to lay out her wealth upon; and this out of no other insidious or vain-glorious, but the one pure Christian fore-mentioned design, and put it to the venture, if God ever suffer thee to want what thou hast thus bestowed. Dorotheus[q] hath excellently stated this, διδασκαλ. ιδ. "There are," saith he, "that give alms," διὰ τὸ εὐλογηθῆναι τὸ χωρίον, "that their farms may prosper," καὶ ὁ Θεὸς εὐλογεῖ τὸ χωρίον, "and God blesseth and prospers their farms; there be that do it for the good success of their voyage, and God prospers their voyage; some for their children, and God preserves their children; yea, and some to get praise, and God affords them that, and frustrates none in the merchandise he designed to traffic for, but gives every one that which he aimed at in his liberality." But then "all these traffickers must not be so unconscionable as to look for any arrear of further reward; when they are thus paid at present, they must remember οὐδὲν ἑαυτοῖς παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ, they have no *depositum* behind laid up with God for them;" and therefore it is necessary for a Christian to propose to himself more ingenious designs, to do what he doth in obedience to, and out of a pure love of God, and then there is more than all these, even "a kingdom prepared for him." Mat. xxv. [34.]

I must draw to a conclusion, and I cannot do it more seasonably, more to recapitulate and enforce all that hath been said, than in the words of Malachi, "Bring you all the tithes into the storehouse,"—no doubt but this comprehends the duty in the text, the *compleveris anno tertio*, the poor man's tithing,—"that there may be meat in My house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." If this will not open the miser's hand, unshrivel the worldling's heart, I cannot Mal. iii. 10.

[p] Palladii Historia Lausiaca, cap. 5. [Bibl. Patr. Græc., tom. ii. p. 907. Par. 1624.]

[q] [ἔστι γὰρ τὶς ποιῶν ἐλεημοσύνην, διὰ τὸ εὐλογηθῆναι τὸ χωρίον αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὁ Θεὸς εὐλογεῖ τὸ χωρίον αὐτοῦ· ἄλλος ποιεῖ ἐλεημοσύνην, διὰ τὸ πλοῖον αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ Θεὸς σώζει τὸ πλοῖον αὐτοῦ· ἄλλος ποιεῖ διὰ τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὁ Θεὸς σώζει καὶ φυλάττει τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ· ἄλλος ποιεῖ διὰ τὸ δοξασθῆναι, καὶ ὁ Θεὸς δοξάζει αὐτὸν, καὶ οὐκ ἀθετεῖ ὁ Θεὸς τινὰ. ἀλλὰ ὃ θέλει ἕκαστος παρέχει αὐτῷ, . . . ἀλλ' οὗτοι πάντες ἀπέχουσι τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν. οὐδὲν γὰρ ἀπέθεντο ἑαυτοῖς παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ. B. Dorothei Abb. Doctrin. xiv., ibid., tom. i. p. 837.]

SERM. XII.

invent an engine cunning or strong enough to do it. Thou that hast tired and harassed out thy spirits in an improsperous successless pursuit of riches, digged and drudged in the mines, thy soul as well as thou, and all the production of thy patience and industry crumbled and mouldered away betwixt thy fingers; thou that wouldest fain be rich, and canst not get Plutus to be so kind to thee, art willing to give Satan his own asking, thy *prostraveris* for his *totum hoc*, to go down to hell for that merchandise, and yet art not able to compass it, let me direct thee to a more probable course of obtaining thy designs, to a more thriving trade, a more successful voyage; not all the devotions thou daily numberest to the devil or good fortune, not all the inventions, and engines, and stratagems of covetousness managed by the most practised worldling, can ever tend so much to the securing thee of abundance in this life, as this one *compleveris* of the text, the payment of the poor man's tithing. And then suffer thyself for once to be disabused, give over the worldling's way, with a *hac non successit*, reform this error of good husbandry, this mistake of frugality, this heresy of the worldling, and come to this new insurer's office, erected by God Himself, "prove and try if God do not open thee the windows of heaven." Shall I add for the conclusion of all, the mention of that poor, unconsidered merchandise, the treasures of heaven, after all this wealth is at an end, the riches of the celestial paradise, which like that other of Eden is the posing of geographers, *pars globi incognita*, undiscovered yet to the worldling's heart. Methinks there should be no hurt in that, if such friends may be made of this mammon of unrighteousness, this false-hearted unfaithful wealth of yours, that "when you fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations;" sure this may be allowed to join with other motives to the performance of a well-tasted wholesome duty. In a word, if earth and heaven combined together be worth considering, the possession of the one, and reversion of the other, abundance and affluence here, the yearly wages of alms-giving, and joys and eternity hereafter, the final reward of alms-giving, a present coronet and a future crown, a Canaan below and a Jerusalem above; if the conjunction of these two may have so much influence on your hearts, as in contemplation of them to set you about

[Mat. iv. 9.]

[Luke xvi. 9.]

the motion that nature itself inclines you to, and neither world nor flesh have any manner of quarrel to feign against it, then may I hope that I have not preached in vain, that what I have now only, as a precentor, begun to you, the whole chorus will answer in the counterpart; what hath been now proclaimed to your ears be echoed back again by your hearts and lives, and the veriest stone in the temple take up its part, the hardest, impenetrablest, unmercifulest heart join in the *ἀμοιβαῖον*.

And this shall be the sum not only of my exhortation but my prayer, that that God of mercies will open your eyes first, and then your hearts, to the acknowledgment and practice of this duty, direct your hands in the husbanding that treasure intrusted to them, that mercy being added to your zeal, charity to your devotion, your goodness may shine as well as burn, that men may see and taste your good works, glorify God for you here, and you receive your crown of glory from God hereafter.

NINETEEN SERMONS

PREACHED

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS,

BY THE REVEREND AND LEARNED

HENRY HAMMOND, D.D.

SERMON XIII.

Ezek. xvi. 30.

The work of an imperious whorish woman.

Not to chill your ears by keeping you long at the doors; not to detain you one minute with a cold unprofitable preface; this chapter is the exactest history of the spiritual estate of the Jews, i. e. "the elect of God," and the powerfulest exprobration of their sins, that all the writings under heaven can present to our eyes. From the first time I could think I understood any part of it, I have been confident that never any thing was set down more rhetorically, never more πάθος and ὕψος, more "affection" and "sublimity of speech," ever concurred in any one writing of this quantity, either sacred or profane. It were a work for the solidest artist to observe distinctly every part of logic and rhetoric that lies concealed in this one chapter, and yet there is enough in the surface and outward dress of it, to affect the meanest understanding that will but read it. For our present purpose it will suffice to have observed, 1. That the natural sinful estate of the Jews, being premised in the five first verses; 2. The calling of them in this condition, in their pollutions, in their blood, and bestowing all manner of spiritual ornaments upon them, following in the next ten verses; the remainder is mostwhat spent in the upbraiding and aggravating their sins to them in a most elevated strain of reproof; and the ἀκμὴ or "highest pitch" of it, is in the words of my text, "the work of an imperious whorish woman."

For the handling of which words, I first beg two *postulata* to be granted and supposed, before my discourse, because I would not trouble you to hear them proved.

I. That the elect chosen people of God, the Jews, were degenerate into heathen, desperate, devilish sinners.

II. That what is literally spoken in aggravation of the Jews' sin, is as fully applicable to any other sinful people, with whom God hath entered covenant as He did with the Jews.

And then the subject of my present discourse shall be this; that indulgence to sin in a Christian is the "work of an imperious whorish woman." And that, 1. Of "a woman," noting a great deal of weakness; and that not simple natural weakness, through a privation of all strength, but an acquired, sluggish weakness, by effeminate neglecting to make use of it. 2. Of "a whore," noting unfaithfulness and falseness to the husband. 3. Of "an imperious whore," noting insolency and an high pitch of contempt.

And of these briefly and plainly; not to increase your knowledge, but to enliven and inflame the practical part of your souls; not to enrich your brains with new store, but to sink that which you have already down into your hearts.

And first of the first, that indulgence to sin in a Christian is the work of "a woman;" an effect and argument of an infinite deal of weakness, together with the nature and grounds of that weakness: "the work," &c.

And this very thing, that it may be the more heeded, is emphatically noted three several times in this one verse. 1. "The work of a woman," in my text, a poor, cowardly, pusillanimous part that any body else, any one that had but the least spark of valour or manhood in him, would scorn to be guilty of, an argument of one that hath suffered all his parts and gifts to lie sluggish and unprofitable, and at last even quite perished by disusing. As the weakness of women, below men, proceeds not only from their constitution and temper, but from their course of life; not from want of natural strength, but of civil manlike exercise, which might stir up and discipline, and ripen that strength they have: for if their education were as warlike, and their strength by valiant undertaking so set out, viragos and amazons would be well-nigh as ordinary as soldiers. And so will the comparison hold of those womanish, sluggish, abusers of God's graces. Then in the first words of this verse, "How weak is thy heart!" noting it to be a degree of weakness below ordinary,

as we call one a weak man that hath done any thing rashly or unadvisedly, which, if he had but thought on, he could never have been so sottish, his ordinary reason would have prompted him to safer counsels. In brief; any frequent, indiscreet actions, argue a weak fellow: not that he wants strength of discretion to do better, but that he makes no use of it in his actions. Thirdly, "How weak is thy heart!" thy heart, i. e. the principal part of the man,—as the brain is the speculative,—the fountain of good and evil actions, and performances. Now the word לב in the original, signifying "the heart," being naturally of the masculine gender, is here set in the feminine, out of order, perhaps emphatically, to note an unmanlike, impotent, effeminate heart; all its actions are mixed with so much passion and weakness, they are so raw and womanish, that it would grieve one to behold a fair, comely, manlike Christian in show, betraying so much impotency in his behaviour,—even like the emperor a spinning, —one who had undertaken to be a champion for Christ, led away and abused and baffled by every pelting paltry lust. It is lamentable to observe what a poor, cowardly, degenerous spirit is in most Christians; with how slender assaults and petty stratagems they are either taken captive or put to flight; how easily in their most resolute undertakings of piety or virtue they are either vanquished or caught. The ordinariest, coarsest, hard-favouredst temptation that they can see, affects and smites them suddenly; they are entangled before they are wooed, and the least appearance of any difficulty, the vizard or picture of the easiest danger, is enough to fright them for ever from any thought of religion or hope of heaven.

For a mere natural man that hath nothing but original sin, or worse in him, that hath received nothing from God and his parents but a talent in a broken vessel, a soul infected by a crazy body, diseased as soon as born; for a heathen that hath nothing to subsist on but a poor pittance of natural reason, but one eye to see by, and that a dim one; for a mere barbarian or gentile to be thus triumphed over by every devil,—as an owl by the smallest bird in the air,—might be matter of pity rather than wonder. And yet few of them were such cowards; those very weapons that nature had furnished them with, being rightly put on and fitted to them,

stood many of them in very good stead. There were few passions, few sins of an ordinary size, but a philosopher and mere stoic would be able to meet and vanquish. And therefore it is not so much natural, as affected weakness; not so much want of strength, as sluggishness and want of care; not so much impotency, as numbness and stupidity of our parts, which hath so extremely disabled those that take themselves to be the weakest of us.

The truth is, we are willing to conceive that our natural abilities are quite perished and annihilate, and that God hath no ways repaired them by Christ, because we will not be put to the trouble of making use of them. We would spare our pains, and therefore would fain count ourselves impotent, as sluggards that personate and act diseases because they would not work; or the old tragedians which could call a god down upon the stage[a] at any time, to consummate the impossiblest plot, and therefore would not put their brains to the toil of concluding it fairly.

Certainly the decrepitest man under heaven, if he be but a degree above a carcase, is able to defend himself from an ordinary fly. It is one of the devil's titles to be Beelzebub, the prince of flies; and such are many of his temptations; he that hath but life in him may keep himself from any harm of one of them; but the matter is, they come in flocks, and being driven once away they return again. *Musca est animal insolens,* and the devil is frequent in these temptations, and though you could repel them as fast as they come, yet it would be a troublesome piece of work; it will be more for your ease to lie still under them, to let them work their will. So in time fly-blows beget noisomeness and vermin in the soul; and then the life and death of that man becomes like that of the Egyptians, or Herod, and no plague more finally desperate than those two of flies and lice. I am resolved there be many temptations which foil many jolly Christians, which yet a mere natural man that never dreamt of Scripture, or God's Spirit, might, if he did but bethink himself, resist, and many times overcome. Many acts of uncleanness, of intemperance, of contempt of superiors, of murder, of false dealing, of swear-

[Exod. viii. 24; Acts xii. 23.]

[a] [θεὸς ἀπὸ μηχανῆς. Prov. cf. Plat. Cratylus, p. 425, D. Erasm. Adag. 591. Cic. de Nat. D. i. 20.]

ing and profaning, that cheap, unprofitable, that untempting, and therefore unreasonable sin; many acts, I say, of these open abominable sins, which either custom or human laws make men ashamed of, and the like; the very law of reason within us is able to affront, and check, and conquer. That ἔμφυτος καὶ φυσικὸς νόμος, as Methodius[b] calls it, "that law born with us;" *naturale judicatorium*, saith Austin against Pelagius[c]; *lux nostri intellectus*, say the schoolmen out of Damascen[d]; nay, ἐπαγγελία ἀνθρώπου, saith the stoic[e], the promise that every one makes to nature, the obligation that he is bound in when he hath first leave to be a man, or as Hierocles on the Pythagorean verses[f], "Ορκος ἐνουσιωμένος τοῖς λογικοῖς γένεσιν, "That oath that is co-ætaneous, and co-essential to all reasonable natures," and engages them μὴ παραβαίνειν, κ.τ.λ., "not to transgress the laws that are set them[g]." This is, I say, enough to keep us in some terms or compass, to swathe and bind us in, to make us look somewhat like men, and defeat the devil in many a skirmish. But how much more for a Christian, who, if it were by nothing but his baptism, hath certainly some advantages of other men. For one that, if he acknowledge any, worships the true God, never went a fooling after idols, which was the original of the heathens "being given up to vile affections;" for one that lives Rom. i. 26. in a civil country, among people that have the faces and hearts of men and Christians, made as it were "to upbraid his ways, Wisd. ii. 14. and reprove his thoughts;" for one that is within the sound of God's law and light of His gospel, by which he may edify more than ever heathen did by thunder and lightning; for one that cannot choose but fear and believe, and love, and hope in God, in some measure or kind, be he never so unre-

[b] In Phot., p. 91, b. [Methodius de Resurrectione ap. Photii Bibl. n. 234. et ad calc. op. S. Amphilochii, p. 316. ed. Par. 1644.]

[c] [Wiggers (In primam secundæ D. Thomæ, quæst. 19. art. 6. v. 19) says, "Ita nomine conscientiæ utitur D. Hieronymus in cap. i. Ezechielis, et D. Basilius in Comment. de Proverb. circa initium, quando conscientiam vocat *naturale judicatorium*, item Damascenus, quando eam dicit esse *lucem nostri intellectus*." The passage in S. Basil is (Homil. in Princip. Proverb. § 91. Op., tom. ii. p. 106, B), ἐπειδή τι ἔχομεν παρ' ἑαυτοῖς κριτήριον φυσικὸν, δι' οὗ τὰ καλὰ τῶν πονηρῶν διακρίνομεν, κ.τ.λ. The reference to S. Austin seems to be a mistake.]

[d] [γνῶσις φῶς ἐστι ψυχῆς λογικῆς. S. Joan. Damasc. Dialect. cap. 1. Op., tom. i. p. 7, B.]

[e] [Epicteti Dissert. ab Arriano digest., lib. i. c. 9. § 7.]

[f] [Hierocles in aur. carm. Pyth. ver. 2. p. 34. ed. 1742.]

[g] νόμος ἄγραφος καὶ θεῖος. Porphyrius de abstinentia, lib. i. p. 10. [c. 28, p. 46; ed. Rhoer.] θεῖαι παραγγελίαι, ibid. lib. ii. p. 26, [c. 61. p. 212.] ἱεροὶ νόμοι, lib. iv. p. 50. [c. 21. p. 266.]

generate; for him, I say, that hath all these outward restraints, and perhaps some inward twinges of conscience, to curb and moderate him, to be yet so stupid under all these helps as never to be able to raise up one thought toward heaven, to have yet not the least atom of soul to move in the ways of godliness, but to fall prostrate like a carcase, or a statue, or that idol Dagon, with his feet stricken off, not able to stand before the slightest motion of sin; or if a lust, or a fancy, or a devil, be he the ugliest in hell, any thing but God, appear to him, presently to fall down and worship. This is such a sottish condition, such an either lethargy or consumption of the soul, such an extreme degree of weakness, that neither original sin, that serpent that despoiled Adam, nor any one single devil, can be believed to have wrought in us; but that ὁ δῆμος,—as the Platonics call it[h],—"a popular government of sin," under a multitude of tyrants, which have for so long a while wasted and harassed the soul, so that now it is quite crest-fallen, as that legion of devils which dwelt among the tombs in a liveless, cadaverous, noisome soul; or more truly that "evil spirit," that made the man disclaim and renounce Christ and His mercies when He came to cure; "Let us alone, what have we to do with Thee?" By which is noted, that contentedness and acquiescence in sin; that even stubborn wilfulness and resolvedness to die, that a long sluggish custom in sin will bring us to; and that you may resolve on, as the main discernible cause of this weakness of the heart, a habit, and long service and drudgery in sin. But then, as a ground of that, you may take notice of another, a fancy that hath crept into most men's hearts,—and suffers them not to think of resisting any temptation to sin,—that all their actions, as well evil as good, were long ago determined and set down by God; and now nothing left to them but a necessity of performing what was then determined. I would fain believe that that old heresy of the stoics, revived indeed among the Turks, concerning the inevitable production of all things, that fatal necessity, even of sins, should yet never have gotten any footing or entertainment among Christians; but that by a little experience in the practice of the world, I find it among many a main piece of their faith, and the only point that can yield

[1 Sam. v. 3, 4.]

Mark v. 3, 9.

Mark i. 23, 24.

[h] [Cf. Maximus Tyr. Dissertat. xxxiii. § 6. p. 397. ed. Davis.]

them any comfort; that their sins, be they never so many and outrageous, are but the effects, or at least the consequents, of God's decree; that all their care and solicitude, and most wary endeavours, could not have cut off any one sin from the catalogue; that unless God be pleased ἀπὸ μηχανῆς to come down upon the stage by the irresistible power of His constraining Spirit, as with a thunderbolt from heaven, to shake and shiver to pieces the carnal man within them, to strike them into a swoon as He did Saul, that so He may convert them; and in a word, to force and ravish them to heaven; unless He will even drive and carry them[1], they are never likely to be able to stir; to perform any the least work of reason, but fall minutely into the most irrational, unnatural sins in the world, nay, even into the bottom of that pit of hell, without any stop, or delay, or power of deliberating in this their precipice. This is an heresy that in some philosopher-Christians hath sprouted above ground, hath shewed itself in their brains and tongues: and that more openly in some bolder wits; but the seeds of it are sown thick in most of our hearts, I fear in every habitual sinner amongst us, if we were but at leisure to look into ourselves. The Lord give us a heart to be forewarned in this behalf.

[1 Sam. xxviii. 20.]

To return into the road: our natural inclinations and propensions to sin are no doubt active and prurient enough within us; somewhat of Jehu's constitution and temper, they drive very furiously. But then to persuade ourselves that there is no means on earth besides the very hand of God, and that out of our reach, able to trash or overflow this furious driver; that all the ordinary clogs that God hath provided us, our reason and natural conscience as men, our knowledge as Christians; nay, His restraining, though not sanctifying graces, together with the lungs and bowels of His ministers, and that energetical powerful instrument, the "gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation, even to every Jew," nay, and heathen; to resolve that all these are not able to keep us in any compass, to quell any the least sin we are inclined to; that unless God will by force make saints of us, we must needs presently be devils, and so leave all to God's omnipotent working, and never

[2 Kings ix. 20.]

[Rom. i. 16.]

[1] θεοφορούμενοι.

make use of those powers with which He hath already furnished us. This is a monstrous piece of unchristian divinity, a way, by advancing the grace of God, to destroy it, and by depending on the Holy Ghost, to grieve, if not to sin against Him; to make the corruption of our nature equal to, nay, surpassing the punishment of the devils; a necessary and irreversible obduration in all kinds and measures of sin.

This one practical heresy will bring us through all the prodigies of the old philosophical sects, from stoics to epicurism, and all sensual libertinism, and from thence to the *μετεμψύχωσις* of the Pythagoreans. For unless the soul that is now in one of us had been transplanted from a swine, or some other the most stupid, sottish, degenerous sort of beasts, it is impossible that it should thus naturally, and necessarily, and perpetually, and irrecoverably, delight and wallow in every kind of sensuality, without any check or contradiction, either of reason or Christianity. If I should tell you that none of you that hath understood and pondered the will of God wants abilities in some measure to perform it, if he would muster up all his forces at time of need; that every Christian hath grace enough to smother lusts in the womb, and keep them, at least, from bringing forth; to quell a temptation before it break out into an actual sin, you would think perhaps that I flattered you, and deceived myself in too good an opinion of your strength. Only thus much then; it would be somewhat for your edification to try what you could do: certainly there is much more in a Christian's power,—if he be not engaged in a habit of sin,—than we imagine; though not for the performing of good, yet for the inhibiting of evil. And therefore bethinking ourselves, *ὅτι Διὸς υἱοὶ ἐσμεν*, saith Arrian[j], "that we are the sons of God," *μηδὲν ταπεινὸν καὶ ἀγεννὲς*, "let us not have too low and degenerous an opinion of ourselves." Do but endeavour resolutely and courageously to repel temptations as often as they solicit thee, make use of all thy ordinary restraints, improve thy natural fear and shamefacedness, thy Christian education, tender disposition to the highest pitch; do but

j [*γεγόναμεν ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ πάντες προηγουμένως, καὶ ὁ θεὸς πατήρ ἐστι τῶν τ' ἀνθρώπων καὶ τῶν θεῶν· οἶμαι ὅτι οὐδὲν ἀγεννὲς οὐδὲ ταπεινὸν ἐνθυμηθήσεται περὶ ἑαυτοῦ.* Epict. Dissert. ab Arriano digest., lib. i. c. 3. § 1.]

hold sincerely as long as thou art able, and though I will not say that all thy sins shall be confined to those two heads of original (a branch of which are evil motions) and of omission; yet I will undertake that thou shalt have an easier burden of actual commissions upon thy soul, and that will prove a good ease for thee. Those are they that weigh it down into the deep, that sink it desperateliest into that double Tophet of obduration and despair. Final obduration being a just judgment of God, on one that hath filled up the measure of his iniquities, that hath told over all the hairs of his head, and sands of the sea in actual sins; and a necessary consummation of that, despair; the first part, the prologue and harbinger to that worm in hell.

It were easy to shew how faith might afford a Christian sufficient guard and defence against the keenest weapon in the devil's armoury, and retort every stroke upon himself. But because this is the faith only of a wife, not as we now consider as a woman at large, but in a nearer obligation, as a spouse, we shall more opportunely handle that in the next part, where we shall consider indulgence in sin as the work of a "whorish woman;" where whoredom, noting adultery, presupposes wedlock, and consists in unfaithfulness to the husband, the thing in the next place to be discovered: "the work," &c.

That Christ is offered by His Father to all the Church for an husband; that He waits, and begs, and sends presents to us all to accept of the proposal, the whole book of Canticles, that song of spiritual love, that affectionate wooing sonnet will demonstrate. That every Christian accepts of this match, and is sacramentally espoused to Christ at his baptism; his being called by the husband's name imports: for that is the meaning of the phrase, "Let us be called by Thy name," Is. iv. 1. i. e., marry us. That faith is the only thing that makes up the match, and entitles us to His name and estate, is observable both from many places of Scripture, and by the opposition which is set betwixt a Christian and all others, Jews and infidels, betwixt the spouse and either the destitute widow or barren virgin; the ground of which is only faith.

So then, every Christian at his baptism being supposed a believer, and thereby espoused sacramentally to Christ, and

so obliged to all the observances, as partaker of all the privileges of a wife; doth at every unchaste thought, or adulterous motion, offend against the fidelity promised in marriage, by every actual breach of this faith, is for the present guilty of adultery, but by indulgence in it, is downright a whore; i. e., either one that came to Christ with an unchaste adulterous love to gain somewhat, not for any sincere affection to His person, but insidious to His estate; and having got that, is soon weary of His person: or else one that came to Him with pure virgin thoughts, resolving herself a perpetual captive to His love, and never to be tired with those beloved fetters of His embraces; but in time meets with a more flattering amiable piece of beauty, and is soon hurried after that, and so forgetteth both her vows and love.

Thus shall you see a handsome, modest, maidenly Christian, espoused to Christ at the font, and fully wedded by His ring at confirmation: nay, come nearer yet to Him, and upon many solemn expressions of fidelity and obedience, vouchsafed the seal of His very heart in the sacrament of His blood. Another that hath lived with Him a long while in uniform, constant loyalty, noted by all the neighbourhood for an absolute wife; a grave, solemn, matronly Christian; yet either upon the allurements of some fresh sprightful sin, or the solicitations of an old-acquaintance lust, the insinuations of some wily intruder, or a specious show of a glorious glittering temptation; or when these are all wanting, upon the breaking out of "an evil heart of unbelief,"—which some outward restraints formerly kept in,—"departing from the living God," profess open neglect and despite against the husband which before they so wooed, and flattered, and made love to. It were long to number out to you, and give you by tale a catalogue of those defections and adulterous practices which Christians are ordinarily observed to be guilty of,—which whether they go so far as to make a divorce betwixt the soul and Christ, or whether only to provoke Him to jealousy, whether by an intercision of grace and faith, or by an interruption and suspension of the acts, I will not now examine,—I will go no further than the text, which censures it here as a piece of spiritual whoredom, of treacherous unfaithful dealing, to be light, unconstant, and false to Christ,

[Heb. iii. 12.]

whose spouse they are esteemed, whose name they bear, and estate they pretend title to. And so indeed it is, for what greater degree of unfaithfulness can be imagined? What fouler breach of matrimonial covenants, than to value every ordinary prostitute sin before the precious chastest embraces of an husband and a Saviour? to be caught and captivate with the meanest vanity upon earth, when it appears in competition with all the treasures in heaven? Besides, that spiritual armour which faith bestows on a Christian, sufficient to "quench all the fiery darts of the wicked," or, as the Greek hath it, τοῦ πονηροῦ, that "wicked one," the devil, methinks there is a kind of moral influence from faith on any wise and prudent heart, enough to enliven, and animate, and give it spirit, against the force or threatenings of any the strongest temptation, and to encourage him in the most crabbed, uncouth, disconsolate undertakings of godly obedience. For what sin didst thou ever look upon with the fullest delight of all thy senses, in the enjoying of which thy most covetous, troublesome, importunate lusts would all rest satisfied, but one minute of heaven, truly represented to thy heart, would infinitely outweigh? A Turk is so affected with the expectation of his carnal paradise, those catholic everlasting stews, which he fancies to himself for heaven, that he will scarce taste any wine all his life-time for fear of disabling and depriving him of his lust; he will be very staunch from sin, that he may merit and be sure to have his fill of it. And then certainly one clear single apprehension of that infinite bliss which the eye of faith represents to us, were enough to ravish a world of souls, to preponderate all other delights, which the most poetical fancy of man or devil could possess us with. Were but the love of Christ to us ever suffered to come into our hearts,—as species to the eye by introreception,—had we but come to the least taste and relish of it, what would we not do to recompense, and answer, and entertain that love? what difficulty would it not ingratiate to us? what exquisite pleasure, or carnal rival, would not be cheap and contemptible in its presence? If thou hadst but faith to the size of "a grain of mustard-seed," speak to this mountain, and it shall be removed, the tallest, cumbersome, unwieldy temptation which all the giants in hell can mould together,—as once they are

Eph. vi. 16.

[Mat. xvii. 20.]

feigned to do the hills to get up to heaven, *Pelion Ossæ*[k], &c., —if thou dost but live, or breathe by faith, shall vanish at the least blast of thy nostrils. The clear representation of more valuable pleasures and more horrid dangers than any the flesh can propose, certainly attending the performances or breach of our vow of wedlock, is enough to charm and force us to perpetual chastity, to fright or scoff all other wooers out of our sights, to reprobate and damn them as soon as they appear: there is in this husband of ours a confluence of all infinite imaginable delights, which whosoever hath but once tasted, but from a kiss of his mouth, he is not unconstant but sottish, if he ever be brought to any new embraces. But then openly to contemn, to profess neglects, to go a wooing again, to tempt and solicit even temptations, to "give gifts to all thy lovers, to hire them that they may come unto thee on every side for thy whoredoms;" this is a degree of stupidity and insolence, of insatiable pride and lust, that neither the iniquity of Sodom, nor stubbornness of Capernaum, nor the rhetoricalest phrase almost in the very Scripture can express, but only this in my text, which comes in the last place with a marvellous emphasis, "imperious." "The work," &c.

Ezek. xvi. 33.

In which one epithet many of the highest degrees of sin are contained. 1. Confidence and shamelessness in sinning, "an imperious whore," *mulier impudicæ libidinis*, one that is better acquainted with lust than to blush when she meets with it; modesty and coyness are but infirmities rather than good qualities of youth; effects of ignorance and tenderness and unexperience in sin, a little more conversation in the world will season men to a bolder temper, and in time instruct them that this modesty is the only thing they ought to be ashamed of. It is not ingenuity but cowardice, a poor degenerous pusillanimous humour, to go fearfully about a vice, to sin tremblingly and with regrets: this country disposition, or soft temper, when we come abroad into the world amongst men, it is quite out-dated. Thus is impudence and a forehead of steel grown not the armour only, but even the complexion of every manlike spirit. He is not fit for the devil's war, that is so poorly appointed either with courage or munition,

[k] [Virg. Georg. i. 281.]

as to be discomfited by a look; it is part of his honour not to fear disgrace, and his reputation not to stand upon so poor a thing as reputation.

2. "Imperious," taking all authority into her own hands, scorning to be afraid either of God or devil, *quæ regno posita neminem timeat*, having fancied herself in a throne, never thinks either of enemy to endanger, or of superior to quell her; but sins confidently, *et in cathedra*, in state, in security, Ps. i. 1. and at ease, and never doubts or fears to be removed.

And this is most primarily observable in the Jews, depending on their carnal prerogatives, as being of Abraham's seed; and yet thus also may we suspect do many among us, some tying God's decree of election to their persons and individual entities, without any reference to their qualifications or demeanours; others by a premature persuasion that they are in Christ, and so in such an irreversible estate, that all the temptations, all the devils, nay, all the sins in hell, shall never dispossess them. Others resolved that God can see no sin in His children, in imitation of Marcus in Irenæus[1], whose heresy, or rather fancy it was ἑαυτὸν δι' ἀπολύτρωσιν ἀόρατον γίνεσθαι τῷ κριτῇ, "that by the redemption they were become invisible." Upon these I say, and other grounds —how true, I will not now examine—do many rash presumers abuse the grace of God unto wantonness; never fear to sin, because they need not fear to be punished; never cease to provoke God, because they are sure He is their friend; and being resolved of Him as a Saviour, contemn Him as a Judge. *Multi ad sapientiam pervenissent, &c.*, saith he, "Many had come to learning enough, had they not believed too soon they had attained it." No such hindrance to proficiency as too timely a conceit of knowledge. Thus might we ordinarily guess some men to have been in good towardly estates, had they not made too much haste to conceive so; and having once possessed themselves of heaven on such slight grounds, such as not a solemn examination of themselves, but some gleams of their fancy had bestowed upon them; it is no wonder if all the effects of their assurance be spiritual security, and supine confidence in sinning: they have hid their heads in heaven by their vain specula-

[1] [S. Iren. adv. Hær., lib. i. c. 13. p. 60; quoted above, p. 160.]

tion, and then think their whole body must needs be safe, be it never so open, and naked, and bare to all temptations. Nay, be they up to the shoulders in carnality, nay, earth, nay, hell, yet seeing, *caput inter nubila*[m], "their head is in the clouds," there is no danger or fear of drowning, be it never so deep or miry. This was Laodicea's estate; she fancied herself great store of spiritual riches, and brought in an inventory of a very fair estate, "I am rich and am increased in goods, and have need of nothing:" any more accession, even of the graces of God, would be but superfluous and burdensome, not knowing all this while, "that she was wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." There is not a blessing upon earth that can any way hope or seem to parallel a sober well-grounded assurance here, that in time we shall be saints in heaven; it is such a paradise upon earth, that heaven itself seems but a second part of it, differing from it rather in degrees and external accomplishments, than in any distinct specifical kind of happiness:—the Lord of heaven by His mighty working, when it shall please Him, begin and consummate it in us! But then to make use of this patent of heaven to engage us further in the deep, to keep us not from the devil's works, but from his attachments; only as a protection to secure our misdemeanours, not to defend our innocence: for a man thus appointed to venture on a precipice, as the Turks, saith Busbequius[n], are wont to try the goodness of a horse by riding him post down the steepest hill; to outdare the devil in his own territories, —as Christ is said to descend thither to triumph over him,— to besiege and set upon hell, presuming of our interest in heaven as of a magical charm, and *ἀλεξίκακον* to keep us safe from death or maims in the midst of enemies, nay, of friends; this is a piece of spiritual pride of Lucifer's own inscribing, an imperious majestic garb of impiety, a triumphant or processionary pomp, an affected stately gait in sin, that nothing but a violent rending power of the Spirit, or a boisterous tempestuous judgment, can force us out of. Such a profane fiduciary as this, which hath even defiled heaven by

Rev. iii. 17.

[Eph. iv. 8, 9.]

[m] [Virg. Æn. iv. 177.]

[n] [Busbequius, Epist. iii. p. 113. ed. Oxon. 1640. Bonitatis periculum fit ex arduo monte per præceps inoffenso pede decursu.]

possessing it, such an hellish saint is like to be torn out of the third heaven into which his speculation hath rapt him, and after a long dream of paradise, find himself awake in hell. And from this degree of religious profaneness, this confidence in sinning on presumption that we are under grace; from this premature resolution, that no sin, no devil, can endanger us; from this imperious whoredom, as from the danger of hell, "Good Lord deliver us."

3. "Imperious" signifies more distinctly a tyrannical lording behaviour, usurping and exercising authority over all. And this the apostate Jew and Christian libertine doth: 1. by tyrannizing over himself, i. e., his faculties and estate: 2. over all that come near him. Over himself, by urging and driving on in a carnal course; not patient of any regrets and resistances that a tender disposition, motions of God's Spirit, or gripes of conscience, can make against it, goading and spuring on any of his faculties, as being too dull and unactive, and slothful in the ways of death, even forcing them—if they be any time foreslowed and trashed by either outward or inward restraints—to sin even in spite of them, and hastening them to a kind of unvoluntary disobedience. Thus will a stone when it is kept violently from the ground, being held in a man's hand, or the like, press and weigh towards the earth incessantly, as if it were naturally resolved to be revenged on any one; to tire him out that thus detained it from its place; nay, when it is let down, you may see it yet press lower, make its print in the earth, as if it would never be satisfied till it could rest in hell. The sinner is never at quiet with himself, *instat et imperat;* "he is urgent and importunate upon himself to satisfy every craving lust." Not the beggarliest affection, or laziest, unworthiest desire of the flesh, but shall have its alms and dole, rather than starve, though it be an atom of his very soul, to the utter undoing and bankrupting of him that gives it.

And for his tyranny over his estate, whether temporal or spiritual, his goods of fortune or gifts of grace, they must all do homage to this carnal idol. All his treasures on earth are richly sold, if they can but yield him the fruition of one beloved sin. And for spiritual illuminations, or any seeds of grace, he will lose them all; and even shut himself for ever

into the darkness of hell, rather than ever be directed by their light, out of those pleasing paths of death.

A restraining grace was but a burdensome, needless encumbrance; and a gleam of the Spirit but a means to set conscience a working, to actuate her malice and execution on sin; and it were a happy exchange, to get but one loving delight or companion for them both. Let but a sin be coy and staunch, not to be gained at the first wooing, and all these together, like Jacob's present out of all his goods, shall be all little enough for a sacrifice or bribe, to solicit or hire it. And this the prophet notes here distinctly, "Thou art contrary to all the whores in the world." In other places "Men give gifts to all whores, but thou givest gifts to all thy lovers." None follow or bribe thee to commit whoredoms: "Thou givest a reward, and no reward is given to thee; therefore thou art contrary."

[Gen. xxxii. xxxiii.]

Ezek. xvi. 33, 34.

The sinner in my text scorns to set so low a value on sin, as that profit or advantage should ingratiate it to him; it is so amiable in his eyes of itself, he will prize it so high, that any other treasure shall not be considerable in respect of it: it is part of his loyalty and expression of his special service to the devil, to become a bankrupt in his cause, to "sell all that he hath," both God and fortunes to "follow him." It is the art and cunning of common whores to raise men's desires of them by being coy, *difficultate augere libidinis pretium*, to hold off, that they may be followed. But this sin is not so artificial, her affections are boisterous and impatient of delay; she is not at so much leisure as to windlace, or use craft to satisfy them; she goes downright a wooing, and if there be any difficulty in compassing, all that she hath is ready for a dowry, and prostitute before her idol, lust.

Ezek. xvi. 34.

Lastly, "imperious" over all that come near him, either men or sins: every man must serve him, either as his pander or companion, to further or associate him. I told you he sinned *in cathedra*, that is, also doctorally and magisterially; every spectator must learn of him, it is his profession, he sets up school for it, his practices are so commandingly exemplary that they do even force and ravish the most maidenly tender conscience. And then, for all inferiors, they are required to provide him means and opportunities of sinning, to find him

Ps. i. 1.

out some game; and no such injury can be done as to rouse or spring a sin that would otherwise have lodged in his walk. It was part of the heathenish Romans' quarrel against the primitive Christians, saith Tertullian[o], that they drove away their devils. These exorcist Christians had banished all their old familiars out of the kingdom, which they were impatient to be deprived of. And thus careful and chary are men of their helps of opportunities to sin; it is all the joy they have in the world, sometimes to have a temptation, and to be able to make use of it; to have the devil continue strong with them, in an old courtier's phrase, "it is their very life," and he that deprives them of it is a murderer.

And for the sins themselves, Lord, how they tyrannize over them; how they will rack, and torture, and stretch every limb of a sin, that they may multiply it into infinites, and sin as often at once as is possible! Adam in the bare eating of an apple committed a multitude of sins. Leo in his eighty-sixth Epistle, Augustine *de Civit. Dei* [p], and other fathers, will number them out to you.

And thus far this tyrant over impiety and lust will be a Pelagian, as to order all his deviation by imitation of Adam's. Every breach of one single law shall contain a brood or nest, into which it may be subdivided; and every circumstance in the action shall furnish him with fresh matter for variety of sin.

Again, how "imperious" is he in triumphing over a sin which he hath once achieved! If he have once got the better of good nature and religion; broke in upon a stubborn, sullen vice, that was formerly too hard for him; how often doth he reiterate and repeat, that he may perfect his conquest, that it may lie prostrate and tame before him, never daring to resist him! And if there be any virgin modest sins, which are ashamed of the light, either of the sun or nature, not coming abroad but under a veil,—as some sins being too horrid and abominable, are fain to ap-

[o] [See Tertull. Apol., c. 23, and 43.]

[p] In illo uno peccato possunt intelligi plura peccata, &c.—S. Leo, Epist. 86. [ed. Par. 1618. (Ep. 1. ed. Venet. 1753.) The passage from which these words are taken is omitted in later editions, having been inserted into the Epistle from S. Aug. Enchir. c. 13. (al. 45.) See Quesnel's note, Op. S. Leon., tom. ii. 803. ed. Par. 1675. And this appears to be the passage of S. Augustine referred to by Hammond; it has not been found in the De Civitate Dei. See S. Aug. Op., tom. vi. p. 212.]

pear in other shapes, and so keep us company under the name of amiable or innocent qualities,—then will this violent imperious sinner call them out into the court or market-place; tear away the veil, that he may commit them openly; and, as if the devil were too modest for him, bring him upon the stage against his will, and even take hell by violence and force.

Thus are men come at last to a glorying in the highest impieties, and expect some renown and credit as a reward for the pains they take about it; and then certainly honour is grown very cheap when it is bestowed upon sins, and the man very tyrannical over his spectators' thoughts, that requires to be worshipped for them. This was a piece of the devil's old tyranny in the times of heathenism,—which I would fain Christianity hath out-dated,—to build temples and offer sacrifice to sins under the name of Venus, Priapus, and the like; that men that were naturally δεισιδαίμονες, superstitious adorers of devils, or any thing that was called God, might account incontinence religion, and all impieties in the world a kind of adoration. Thus to profess whoredoms, and set up trophies in our eyes, "to build their eminent place in the head of every way," in the verse next to my text, was then the imputation of the Jews,—and pray God it prove not the guilt of Christians,—from whence the whole Church of them is here styled, "an imperious," &c.

Thus hath the apostate Jew represented to you, in his picture and resemblance, the libertine Christian, and Ezekiel become an historian as well as prophet. Thus hath indulgence in vice among professors of Christianity been aggravated against you, 1. by the weak womanish condition of it; nature itself, and ordinary man-like reason, is ashamed of it; 2. by the adulterous unfaithfulness, 1. want of faith, 2. of fidelity bewrayed in it; 3. by the imperiousness of the behaviour, 1. in shamelessness, 2. in confidence and spiritual security, 3. in tyrannizing over himself and faculties, by force compelling, and then insulting over his goods and graces, prodigally misspending them in the prosecution of his lusts, and lording over all that come near him, men or sins; first pressing, then leading the one, and both ravishing and tormenting the other, to perform him the better service.

Now that this discourse may not have been sent into the air unprofitably; that all these prophetical censures of sin may not be like Xerxes' stripes on the sea[q], on inanimate senseless bodies; it is now time that every tender open guilty heart begin to retire into itself; every one consider whether he be not the man that the parable aims at, that you be not content to have your ears affected, or the suburbs of the soul filled with the sound, unless also the heart of the city be taken with its efficacy. Think and consider whether, 1. this effeminacy and womanishness of heart, and not weakness, but torpor and stupidity, 2. this unfaithfulness and falseness unto Christ expressed by the spiritual incontinence and whoredoms of our souls and actions, 3. that confidence and magnanimous stately garb in sin, arising in some from spiritual pride, in others from carnal security; whether any or all of these may not be inscribed on our pillars, and remain as a στηλιτευτικὸν against us, to upbraid and aggravate the nature and measure of our sins also. I cannot put on so solemn a person as to act a Cato or Aristarchus amongst an assembly that are all *judices critici*, to reprehend the learned and the aged, and to chide my teachers: you shall promise to spare that thankless task, and to do it to yourselves. It will be more civility perhaps, and sink down deeper into ingenuous natures, fairly to bespeak and exhort you; and from the first part of my text only,—because it would be too long to bring down all,—from the weakness and womanish condition of indulgent sinners, to put you in mind of your strength, and the use you are to make of it, in a word and close of application.

We have already taken notice of the double inheritance and patrimony of strength and graces, which we all enjoy, first, as men; secondly, as Christians; and ought not we, beloved, that have spent the liveliest and sprightfulest of our age and parts in the pursuit of learning, to set some value on that estate we have purchased so dear, and account ourselves somewhat the more men for being scholars? Shall not this deserve to be esteemed some advantage to us, and a rise, that being luckily taken, may further us something in

[q] [Herod. vii. 45.]

our stage towards heaven? That famous division of rational animals in Jamblichus out of Aristotle[r], into three different species, that some were men, others gods, others such as Pythagoras, will argue some greater privileges of scholars above other men: that indeed the deep learneder sort, and especially those that had attained some insight *περὶ θείων*, "in divine affairs," were in a kind of a more venerable species than ordinary ignaros.

And for the benefits and helps that these excellencies afford us in our way to heaven, do but consider what a great part of the world overshaded in barbarism, brought up in blind idolatry, do thereby but live in a perpetual hell, and at last pass not into another kind, but degree of darkness; death being but an officer to remove them from one Tophet to another; or at most, but as from a dungeon to a grave. Think on this, and then think and count what a blessing divine knowledge is to be esteemed; even such a one as seems, not only the way, but the entrance; not only a preparation, but even a part of that vision which shall be for ever beatifical. And therefore it will nearly concern us to observe what a talent is committed to our husbanding, and what increase that "hard" master will exact at His coming. For as Dicæarchus[s], in his description of Greece, saith of the Chalcidians, "that they were *μαθημάτων ἐντὸς οὐ μόνον φύσει ἀλλὰ καὶ φωνῇ*, born, as it were, with one foot in learning, and both by the genius of the place and language" which they spake, being Greek, even sucked the arts from their mothers' breasts, at least were prepared for, and initiated in them by nature; and therefore it would be a great shame for them not to be scholars. So most truly of those of us that are learned, full, illuminate Christians; the very language that we speak, and air we breathe in, doth naturally infuse some sacred instincts into us; doth somewhat enter us in this spiritual, heavenly wisdom; will be

[Mat. xxv. 24.]

[r] [*ἱστορεῖ δὲ καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης ἐν τοῖς περὶ τῆς Πυθαγορικῆς φιλοσοφίας, διαίρεσίν τινα τοιάνδε ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐν τοῖς πάνυ ἀποῤῥήτοις διαφυλάττεσθαι· τοῦ λογικοῦ ζώου τὸ μὲν ἐστὶ θεὸς, τὸ δὲ ἄνθρωπος, τὸ δὲ οἷον Πυθαγόρας.*—Jamblichus de vita Pythagoræ, c. 6.]

[s] [The words of Dicæarchus are, *Οἱ δὲ ἐνοικοῦντες Ἕλληνες, οὐ γένει μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῇ φωνῇ, τῶν μαθημάτων ἐντὸς, φιλαπόδημοι, γραμματικοὶ, τὰ προσπίπτοντα ἐκ τῆς πατρίδος δυσχερῆ γενναίως φέροντες.*—Geograph. Scriptores, ed. Hudson, Oxon. 1703. tom. ii. p. 20. Hammond has obviously misapprehended the meaning of the passage.]

some munition for us, and not suffer us to be so pitifully baffled, and befooled, and triumphed over by that old sophister. And if for all these advantages we prove dunces at last, it will be an increase, not only of our torments, but our shame; of our indignation at ourselves at the day of doom; and the reproach and infamy superadded to our sufferings will scarce afford us leisure to weep and wail, for gnashing of our teeth. And therefore, as Josephus[t] of the Jews, that they prayed to God daily, *οὐχ ὅπως δῷ, κ.τ.λ.*, not that He would bestow good things on them, for He did that already on His own accord, pouring out plenty of all in the midst of them, but *ὅπως δέχεσθαι δύνωνται, καὶ λαβόντες φυλάττωσι*, "that they might be able to receive and keep what He bestowed." So will it concern us to pray and labour mainly for the preserving, that we be the better for this great bounty of God's: that neither our inobservance of His gifts suffer them to pass by us unprofitably and neglected, being either not laid hold on or not employed; nor the unthrifty mishusbanding of them cause the Lord to call in the talent entrusted to us already, because unworthy of any more.

It was a shrewd, though atheistical speech of Hippocrates[u], "that sure, if the gods had any good things to bestow, they would dispense them among the rich," who would be able and ready to requite them by sacrifices: "but all evil presents, all Pandora's box should be divided among the poor," because they are still murmuring and repining, and never think of making any return for favours.

The eye of nature, it seems, could discern thus much of God and His gifts, that they are the most plentifully bestowed, where the greatest return may be expected: and for others, from whom all the liberality in the world can extort no retribution, but grumbling and complaints, it is not charity or alms, but prodigality and riot to bestow on them. These are to be fed, not with bread, but stripes; they are not *πένητες*,

[t] [*παράκλησις δὲ πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν ἔστω διὰ τῆς εὐχῆς καὶ δέησις, οὐχ ὅπως διδῷ τὰ ἀγαθά· δέδωκε γὰρ αὐτὸς ἑκών, καὶ πᾶσιν εἰς μέσον κατέθηκεν· ἀλλ' ὅπως δέχεσθαι δυνώμεθα, καὶ λαβόντες φυλάττωμεν.* Joseph. cont. Apionem, lib. ii. c. 23.]

[u] [*εἰκὸς γὰρ τοὺς μὲν πλουσίους θύειν πολλὰ τοῖς θεοῖς καὶ ἀνατιθέναι ἀναθήματα ὄντων χρημάτων καὶ τιμῶν, τοὺς δὲ πένητας ἧσσον διὰ τὸ μὴ ἔχειν.* Hippocrates, tom. i. p. 563. Medic. Græc., vol. xxi. ed. Kuhn.]

[Gen. xli. 20, 21.] but πτωχοὶ, rather "beggars" than "poor," like Pharaoh's lean kine, after the devouring of the fat ones still lank and very ill-favoured. And the judgment of these you shall find [Mat. xxv. 29.] in the Gospel, "from them shall be taken away even that which they have." And therefore, all which from God, at this time and for ever, I shall require and beg of you, is the exercise and the improvement of your talent; that your learning may not be for ostentation, but for traffic; not to possess, but negotiate withal; not to complain any longer of the poverty of your stock, but presently to set to work to husband it. That knowledge of God which He hath allowed you as your portion to set up with, is ample enough to be the foundation of the greatest estate in the world; and you need not despair, through an active, labouring, thriving course, at last to set heaven as a roof on that foundation: only it will cost you some pains to get the materials together for the building of the walls; it is as yet but a foundation, and the roof will not become it till the walls be raised; and therefore every faculty of your souls and bodies must turn Beza- [Ex. xxxv. 30, 34.] leels and Aholiabs, spiritual artificers for the forwarding and perfecting of this work.

It is not enough to have gotten an abstracted mathematical scheme or diagram of this spiritual building in our brain; it is the mechanical labouring part of religion that must make up the edifice; the work, and toil, and sweat of the soul; the business, not of the designer, but the carpenter; that which takes the rough, unpolished, though excellent materials, and trims and fits them for use; which cuts and polishes the rich, but as yet deformed jewels of the soul, and makes them shine indeed, and sparkle like stars in the firmament. That ground or sum of Pythagorean philosophy, as it is set down by Hierocles in his χρυσᾶ ἔπη, if it were admitted into our schools or hearts, would make us scholars and divines indeed; that virtue is the way to truth, purity of affections a necessary precursory to depth of knowledge, πρῶτον ἄνθρωπον εἶναι καὶ τότε θεὸν, the only means to prepare for the uppermost form of wisdom, the speculation of God, which doth ennoble the soul unto the condition of an ἥρως or θεὸς, of an heroical, nay sacred person, is first to have been the person of a man aright, and by the practice of

virtue to have cleared the eye for that glorious vision. But the divinity and learning of these times floats and hovers too much in the brain, hath not either weight or sobriety enough in it to sink down, or settle it in the heart. We are all for the μεθοδικὴ, as Clemens[v] calls it; the art of sorting out, and laying in order all intellectual store in our brains, tracing the counsels of God, and observing His methods in His secrecies; but never for the πρακτικὴ, the refunding and pouring out any of that store in the alms, as it were, and liberality of our actions. If Gerson's definition of theology, that it is *scientia effectiva non speculativa*[x], were taken into our consideration at the choice of our professions, we should certainly have fewer pretenders to divinity, but it is withal hoped more divines.

The Lacedæmonians and Cretians, saith Josephus[y], brought up men to the practice, but not knowledge of good, by their example only, not by precept or law. The Athenians, and generally the rest of the Grecians, used instructions of laws only, but never brought them up by practice and discipline. "But of all lawgivers," saith he, "only Moses," ἄμφω ταῦτα συνήρμοσεν, "dispensed and measured both these proportionably together." And this, beloved, is that for which that policy of the primitive Jews deserved to be called θεοκρατία, by a special name, the government of God Himself. This is it: the combination of your knowledge with your practice, your learning with your lives, which I shall, in fine, commend unto you, to take out both for yourselves and others. 1. For yourselves, that in your study of divinity you will not behold God's attributes as a sight or spectacle, but as a copy, not only to be admired, but to be transcribed into your hearts and lives; not to gaze upon the sun to the dazzling, nay, destroying of your eyes, but, as it were, in a burning-glass, contract those blessed sanctifying rays that flow from it, to the enlivening and inflaming of your hearts. And 2. in the behalf of others; so to digest and inwardly dispense every part of sacred knowledge into each several member and vein of body and soul, that it may transpire through

[v] [S. Clem. Alex. Pædag., lib. i. c. 1.]
[x] [Joann. Gerson, Op., pars i. p. 566, D. See Practical Catechism, p. 1.]
[y] [Josephus cont. Apionem, lib. ii. c. 16, 17.]

hands, and feet, and heart, and tongue; and so secretly insinuate itself into all about you; that both by precept and example, they may see and follow "your good works," and so "glorify here your Father which is in heaven," that we may all partake of that blessed resurrection, not of the learned and the great, but the just; and so hope and attain to be all glorified together with Him hereafter.

Now to Him, &c.

SERMON XIV.

PHIL. iv. 13.

I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me.

THOSE two contrary heresies that cost St. Austin and the fathers of his time so much pains; the one all for natural strength, the other for irrecoverable weakness, have had such unkindly influence on succeeding ages, that almost all the actions of the ordinary Christian have some tincture of one of these: scarce any sin is sent abroad into the world without either this or that inscription. And therefore parallel to these, we may observe the like division in the hearts and practical faculties between pride and sloth, opinion of absolute power, and prejudice of absolute impotence: the one undertaking all upon its own credit, the other suing, as it were, for the preferment, or rather excuse of being bankrupts upon record; that so they may come to an easy composition with God for their debt of obedience: the one so busy in contemplation of their present fortunes that they are not at leisure to make use of them, their pride helping them to ease; and if you look nearly to poverty too, the other so fastened to this sanctuary, Rev. iii. 17. this religious piece of profaneness, that leaving the whole business to God, as the undertaker and proxy of their obedience, their idleness shall be deemed devotion, and their best piety sitting still.

These two differences of men, either sacrilegious or supine, imperious or lethargical, have so dichotomized this lower sphere of the world, almost into two equal parts, that the practice of humble obedience and obeying humility, the bemoaning our wants to God, with petition to repair them, and the observing and making use of those succours which God in Christ hath dispensed to us; those two foundations of all

Christian duty, providing between them that our religion be neither ἄθεος ἀρετὴ, nor ἀνέργητος εὐχὴ, "neither the virtue of the atheist, nor the prayer of the sluggard," are almost quite vanished out of the world: as when the body is torn asunder, the soul is without any further act of violence forced out of its place, that it takes its flight home to heaven, being thus let out at the scissure, as at the window; and only the two fragments of carcase remain behind.

For the deposing of these two tyrants, that have thus usurped the soul between them, dividing the live child with [1 Kings iii.] that false mother, into two dead parts; for the abating this pride, and enlivening this deadness of practical faculties; for the scourging this stout beggar, and restoring this cripple to his legs; the two provisions in my text, if the order of them only be transposed, and in God's method the last set first, will, I may hope and pray, prove sufficient. "I can do," &c.

1. "Through Christ that strengtheneth me." You have there, first, the assertion of the necessity of grace; and secondly, that enforced from the form of the word ἐνδυναμοῦντα, which imports the minutely continual supply of aids; and then, thirdly, we have not only positively, but exclusively declared the person thus assisting; *in Christo confortante*, it is by Him, not otherwise, we can do thus or thus. Three particulars, all against the natural confidence of the proud atheist.

2. The ἰσχύω πάντα, "I can do all things." First, the ἰσχύω, and secondly, the πάντα; 1. the power; and 2. the extent of that power: 1. the potency; and 2. the omnipotency; and then 3. this not only originally of Christ that strengtheneth, but inherently of me, being strengthened by Christ. Three particulars again, and all against the conceived or pretended impotence, either of the false spy that Numb. xiii. 32. brought news of the giants, Anakims, cannibals, in the way to Canaan; or of the sluggard, that is alway affrighting and keeping himself at home, with the lion in the streets, some μορμολύκειον or other difficulty or impossibility, whensoever Prov. xxvi. 13. any work or travail of obedience is required of us.

It will not befit the majesty of the subject to have so many particulars, by being severally handled, jointly neglected. Our best contrivance will be to shorten the retail for the increas-

ing of the gross, to make the fewer parcels, that we may carry them away the better, in these three propositions.

I. The strength of Christ is the original and fountain of all ours; "Through Christ that," &c.

II. The strength of a Christian, from Christ derived, is a kind of omnipotency, sufficient for the whole duty of a Christian. "Can do all things," &c.

III. The strength and power being thus bestowed, the work is the work of a Christian, of the *suppositum*, the man strengthened by Christ. "I can do," &c.

Of these in this order, for the removing only of those prejudices out of the brain, which may trash and encumber the practice of piety in the heart. And first of the first.

The strength of Christ is the original and fountain of all ours. The strength of Christ, and that peculiarly of Christ the second Person of the Trinity, who was appointed by consent to negotiate for us in the business concerning our souls. All our tenure or plea, to grace or glory, to depend not on any absolute, respectless, though free donation, but conveyed to us in the hand of a Mediator; that privy seal of His annexed [Acts vii.] to the patent, or else of no value at that court of pleas, or that grand assizes of souls. Our natural strength is the gift of God, as God is considered in the first article of our creed, and by that title of creation we have that privilege of all created substances, to be able to perform the work of nature, or else we should be inferior to the meanest creature in this; for the least stone in the street is able to move downwards by its own principle of nature: and therefore all that we have need of in the performing of these is only God's concurrence, whether previous or simultaneous; and in acts of choice, the government and direction of our will, by His general providence and power. However, even in this work of creation, Christ must not be excluded, ברא אלהים "Gods," in the [Gen. i. 1.] plural, all the persons of the Deity, in the whole work, and peculiarly in the *faciamus hominem*, are adumbrated, if not [Gen. i. 26.] mentioned by Moses. And therefore God is said to have made all by His Word, that inward, eternal Word in His [John i. 3.] bosom, an articulation, and, as it were, incarnation of which, was that *fiat et factum est*, which the heathen rhetorician so

admired in Moses for a magnificent sublime expression[a]. Yet in this creation, and consequently this donation of natural strength, peculiarly imputed to the first Person of the Trinity; because no personal act of Christ, either of His satisfaction or merit, of His humiliation or exaltation, did conduce to that; though the Son were consulted about it, yet was it not ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου, "delivered to us in the hand of a Mediator." Our natural strength we have of God, without respect to Christ incarnate, without the help of His mediation; but that
2Cor. iii. 5. utterly unsufficient to bring us to heaven. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing," i. e., saith Parisiensis[b], any thing of moment or valour, according to the dialect of Scripture, that calls the whole man by the name of his soul, —so many souls, i. e., so many men, and so ἡ ψυχὴ σὺ[c], the Pythagoreans' word, thy "soul is thou,"—counts of nothing, but what tends to the salvation of that. But then our supernatural strength, that which is called grace and Christian strength, that is of another date, of another tenure, of another allay; founded in the promise, actually exhibited in the death and exaltation of the Messias, and continually paid out to us, by the continued daily exercise of His offices. 1. The covenant sealed in His blood, after the manner of eastern nations,
[Gen. xvii. 11.] as a counterpart of God's, to that which Abraham had sealed to before in his blood at his circumcision. 2. The benefits made over in that covenant were given up *in numerato*, with a kind of livery and seisin at His exaltation; which is the im-
Eph. iv. 8. Ps. lxviii. [18.] portance of that place, "Thou hast ascended on high." There is the date of it upon Christ's inauguration to His regal office[d]: "Thou hast led captivity captive." There is the evidence of conveyance unto Him, as a reward of His victory and part of His triumph: "Thou hast given gifts," or as the Psalm, "received" "gifts for men." Both importing the same thing in
[Matt. xxviii. 18.] divers relations, received from His Father,—"All power is given to Me,"—that He might give, dispense, convey, and steward it out to men; and so literally still, ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου, "in the hand of a Mediator." And then that which is thus

[a] Longinus de Sublim. [c. 9. circa med.]

[b] [Gulielmus Alvernus Parisiensis de Meritis, Op., tom. i. p. 310. b. H. ed. Par. 1674.]

[c] [Hierocl. in Pyth. Aur. Carm., ver. 25.]

[d] As δῶρον, and λῆμμα, βραβεῖον, and ἆθλον, in Greek.

made over to us is not only the gift of grace, the habit by which we are regenerate: but above that account, daily bubblings out of the same spring, minutely rays of this Sun of Righteousness, which differ from that gift of grace, as the propagation of life from the first act of conception, conservation from creation; that which was there done in a minute is here done every minute; and so the Christian is still *in fieri*, not *in facto esse:* or as a line which is an aggregate of infinite points, from a point *in suo indivisibili;* the first called by the schools, *auxilium gratiæ per modum principii*, the other *per modum concursus.* And this is noted by the word δόσεις, "givings," neither ἕξεις as the heathen[e] called their virtues, as habits of their own acquiring; nor again so properly δῶρα, "gifts," because that proves a kind of tenure after the receipt. *Data, eo tempore quo dantur, fiunt accipientis*, saith the law: but properly and critically δόσεις, "givings," Christ always a giving, confirming minutely not our title but His own gift; or else that as minutely ready again to return to the crown. All our right and title to strength and power is only from God's minutely donation. And the ἐνδυναμοῦντι, in the present tense, implies all depending on the perpetual presence and assistance of His strength. Hence is it that Christ is called "the Father of eternity," i. e., "of the life to come," —μέλλοντος αἰῶνος say the LXX, "the age to come,"—the state of Christians under the gospel, and all that belongs to it; "the Father" which doth not only beget the child, but educate, provide for, put in a course to live and thrive, and deserves far more for that He doth after the birth, than for the being itself; and therefore it is Proclus' observation of Plato, that he calls God, in respect of all creatures, ποιητὴν, a "Maker;" but πατέρα, a "Father," in respect of man. And this the peculiar title of Christ, in respect of His offices; not to be the Maker only, the architect of that age to come, of grace and glory, but peculiarly the Father, which continues His paternal relation for ever; yea, and the exercises of paternal offices by the pedagogy of the Spirit, all the time of nonage, minutely adding and improving, and building him up to the measure and pitch of His own stature and fulness.

Jam. i. 17. [πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθή.]

Isa. ix. 6.

[e] [Arist. Eth. ii. 4.]

Mat. i. 21. And so again that sovereign title of His, "Jesus," i.e., *ἰατρὸς* and *σωτὴρ, αὐτὸς γὰρ σώσει.* This title and office of physician is peculiar to the second Person, to repair the daily decays and ruins of the soul, and not only to implant a principle of health, but to maintain it by a *διαιτητικὸν,* and confirm it minutely [Mal.iii.2.] into an exact habit of soul: and therefore, that Sun of righteousness is said to have His healing in His wings; i. e., in those rays which it minutely sends out, by which as on wings, this fountain of all inherent and imputed righteousness, of sanctifying and justifying grace, takes its flight, and rests upon the Christian soul; and this still peculiarly, *ἐν Χριστῷ ἐνδυναμοῦντι,* not in God, *κοινῶς,* but *κύριως,* in Christ; "in Christ that strengtheneth."

The not observing, or not acknowledging of which difference between the gifts of God and the gifts of Christ, the endowments of that first and this second foundation, the hand of God and the hand of a Mediator, is, I conceive, the ground of all those perplexing controversies about the strength of nature and patrimony of grace. Pelagius, very jealous and unwilling to part with his natural power, "lest any thing in the business of his salvation should be accounted due unto God," they are his own words, if Jerome[g] may be credited, *Mihi nullus auferre poterit liberi arbitrii potestatem, ne si in operibus meis Deus adjutor exstiterit, non mihi debeatur merces, sed ei qui in me operatus.* Socinus again denying all merit and satisfaction of Christ, making all that but a chimera, and so evacuating or antiquating that old tenure by which we hold all our spiritual estate. The Romanists again, at least some of them, bestowing upon the blessed Virgin after conception, such jurisdiction in the temporal procession of the Holy Ghost, that no grace is to be had but by her dispensing[h]; that she, the mother, gives Him that sends the Holy Ghost, and therefore gives all

[g] [S. Hieron. Dial. cont. Pelag., lib. i. c. 6. Op., tom. ii. col. 686, D.]

[h] [A tempore enim, a quo Virgo mater concepit in utero Verbum Dei, quandam (ut ita dicam) jurisdictionem, seu auctoritatem obtinuit in omni Spiritus Sancti processione temporali: ita quod nulla creatura aliquam a Deo obtinuit gratiam vel virtutem, nisi secundum ipsius piam dispensationem . . . . In Christo fuit plenitudo gratiæ sicut in capite, influente in Maria vero, sicut in collo transfundente. Unde Cant. vii. &c. Ideo omnia dona, virtutes, et gratiæ ipsius Spiritus Sancti, quibus vult, quando vult, quomodo vult, et quantum vult, per manus ipsius administrantur. S. Bernardini Senensis de B. M.V., Serm. v. Art. i. cap. 8. Op., tom. iv. p. 92, 93. cf. art. iii. cap. 2. p. 81.]

gifts, *quibus vult, quomodo, quando, et per manus;* that she is the neck to Christ the Head: and[i] *Sublato Virginis patrocinio, perinde ac halitu intercluso, peccator vivere diutius non potest:* and store enough of such emasculate theology as this. And yet others that maintain the quite contradictory to all these, acknowledging a necessity of supernatural strength to the attaining of our supernatural end, and then ask and receive this only, as from the hands and merits of Christ, without the mediation or jurisdiction of any other, are yet had in jealousy and suspicion as back-friends to the cause of God, and enemies to grace; because they leave man any portion of that natural strength which was bestowed on him at his creation. Whereas the limits of both of these being distinctly set, there may safely be acknowledged, first a natural power,—or if you will call it natural grace, the fathers will bear you out in the phrase; *Illius est gratiæ quod creatus est,* St. Jerome[k]; *Gratia Dei qua fecit nos,* St. Austin[l]; and *Crearis gratia,* St. Bernard[m]:—and that properly styled the strength of God, but not of Christ, enabling us for the works of nature. Cant. vii. 4.

And then above this, is regularly superstructed the strength of Christ, special supernatural strength made over unto us, not at our first but second birth; without which, though we are men, yet not Christians, "live," saith Clemens, *ἐθνικὸν καὶ πρῶτον βίον*[n], "a kind of embryon, imperfect heathen," of a child in the womb, of the gentle dark uncomfortable being, a kind of first draught, or ground colours only, and monogram of life. Though we have souls, yet in relation to spiritual acts or objects, but weak consumptive cadaverous souls,—as נפש, the Old Testament word for the soul, and *ψυχὴ* in the LXXII signifies a carcase or dead body, Numb. v. 2, and otherwhere,—and then by this accession of this strength of Christ, this dead soul revives into a kind of omnipotency; the pigmy is sprung up into a giant, this languishing puling state improved into an *ἀθλητικὴ ἕξις*; he

[i] [Viegas Comment. Exeget. in Apocalypsin, cap. xii. de B. Virg. comment. 2. sect. 3. num. 6.]

[k] [S. Hieron. Epist. cxl. (al. cxxxix.) ad Cyprianum, Op., tom. i. col. 1046, C.]

[l] S. August. in Ps. xliv. [§ 10. tom. iv. col. 1616, D.]

[m] [S. Bernard. de gratia et libero arbitrio, c. xiv. § 48, 49. Op., tom. i. col. 628, A, C.]

[n] [S. Clem. Alex. Strom., lib. vii. p. 752, C.]

that even now was insufficient "to think any thing," is "now able to do all things;" which brings me to my second proposition.

> The strength of a Christian, from Christ derived, is a kind of omnipotence sufficient for the whole duty of a Christian; *ἰσχύω πάντα*, "can do all things."

The clearing of this truth from all difficulties or prejudices, will depend mainly on the right understanding of the predicate, *τὰ πάντα*, in my text, or the whole duty of a Christian in the proposition: which two being of the same importance, the same hand will unravel them both. Now what is the whole duty of a Christian but the adequate condition of the second covenant? upon performance of which salvation shall certainly be had, and without which *salvare nequeat ipsa si cupiat salus*, the very sufferings and saving mercies of Christ will avail us nothing. As for any exercise of God's absolute will, or power, in this business of souls under Christ's kingdom, I think we may fairly omit to take it into consideration; for sure the New Testament will acknowledge no such phrase, nor I think any of the ancients that wrote in that language. Whereupon perhaps it will be worth observing, in the confession of the religion of the Greek Church, subscribed by Cyril the present patriarch of Constantinople[o], where having somewhat to do with this phrase, of "God's absolute dominion" so much talked on here in the west, he is much put to it to express it in Greek, and at last fain to do it by a word coined on purpose, a mere Latinism for the turn, *ἀπολελυμένην κυριότητα*: an expression I think capable of no excuse but this, that a piece of new divinity was to be content with a barbarous phrase. Concerning this condition of the second covenant, three things will require to be premised to our present enquiry:

1. That there is a condition, and that an adequate one, of the same extent as the promises of the covenant; something exacted at our hands to be performed, if we mean to
John i. 12. be the better for the demise of that indenture, "as many as

[o] [Cyril Lucar is the person alluded to; Cyrilli Confessio fidei, cap. iii. apud Libros Symbolicos Ecclesiæ Orientalis, ed. Kimmel, p. 26. *εἴ τις ἐπιδῇ ἐπὶ τὴν ἀπολελυμένην τοῦ Θεοῦ αὐθεντείαν καὶ κυριότητα.*]

received Him, to them He gave power," &c. To these, and to none else, positively and exclusively: "To him that overcometh will I give;" "I have fought a good fight," &c. "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown;" then begins the title to the crown, and not before: when the fight is fought, the course finished, the faith kept, then *cœlum rapiunt,* God challenged on His righteousness as a Judge, not on ground of His absolute pleasure as a Lord, which will; but upon supposition of a pact or covenant, which limits and directs the award and process, "for according unto it, God, the righteous Judge, shall give." And in Christ's farewell speech to His disciples, where He seals their commission of embassage and preaching to every creature: "He that believeth not shall be damned;" this believing, whatever it signifies, is that condition here we speak of, and what it imports, you will best see by comparing it with the same passage set down by another amanuensis in the last verse of St. Matthew, "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:" a belief, not of brain or fancy, but that of heart and practice, i. e. distinctly evangelical or Christian obedience, the *πάντα* in my text, and the whole duty of a Christian in the proposition; which if a Christian, by the help of Christ, be not able to perform, then consequently he is still uncapable of salvation by the second covenant; no creature being now rescuable from hell, *stante pacto,* but those that perform the condition of it, that irreversible oath of God, which is always fulfilled in kind without relaxation, or commutation, or compensation of punishment, being already gone out against them; "I have sworn in My wrath that they shall not enter into My rest." And therefore when the end of Christ's mission is described, "that the world through Him might be saved;" there is a shrewd 'but' in the next verse, "but he that believeth not, is condemned already:" this was upon agreement between God and Christ, that the impenitent infidel should be never the better for it, should die unrescued in his old condemnation. So that there is not only a logical possibility, but a moral necessity of the performing of this *τὰ πάντα,* or else no possibility of salvation. And then that reason of disannulling the old, and establishing the new covenant, because there was no justification to be had by the old,

Rev. ii. 7. 2 Tim. iv. 7. Mark xvi. 16. [Mat. xxviii. 20.] Heb. iv. 3. John iii. 17.

Gal. iii. 21. rendered Gal. iii. 21, would easily be retorted upon the Apostle thus, Why, neither is any life or justification to be had by this second; the absurdity of which sequel being considered, may serve for one proof of the proposition.

The second thing to be premised of this condition is, that it is an immutable, unalterable, undispensable condition. The second covenant standing, this must also stand; that hath been proved already, because a condition adequate, and of the same latitude with the covenant.

But now secondly, this second, both covenant and con-
Ezek. xvi. 60. dition, must needs stand an everlasting covenant. No possibility of a change, unless, upon an impossible supposition, there should remain some other fourth person of the Deity to come into the world. The tragic poets, saith Tully[p], when they had overshot themselves in a desperate plot that would never come about, *ad deum confugiunt*, they were fain to fly to a god, to lay that unruly spirit that their fancy had raised. Upon Adam's sin and breach of the condition of the first covenant, there was no possibility in the wit of man, in the sphere of the most poetical fancy, *fabulæ exitum explicare*, to come off with a fair conclusion, had not the second Person of the Trinity, that *Θεὸς ἀπὸ μηχανῆς*, come down in His tire, and personation of flesh, not in the stage clothes or livery, but substantial form of a servant upon the stage. And He again having brought things into some possibility of a happy conclusion,—though it cost Him His life in the negotiation,—leaves it at His departure in the trust of His vicegerent, the "spirit of His power," to go through with His beginnings; to see that performed,—which only He left unperfected, as being our task, not His,—the condition of the second covenant. The Spirit then enters upon the work, dispatches officers, ambassadors to all nations in
Mark xvi. 15. the world, *πάσῃ κτίσει*, to "every creature." And Himself
Mat. xxviii. 20. to the "end of the world," goes along to back them in their ministry. And then the next thing the Scripture tells us of, is the coming to harvest after this seed time, and he "that believeth not, shall be damned;" and so that sacred canon is shut up.

[p] [Ut tragici poetæ cum explicare argumenti exitum non potestis, confugitis ad Deum.—Cic. de Nat. Deorum, lib. iv. c. 20.]

The issue of this second *præcognitum* is this; that if there still remain any difficulties, any impossibilities to be overcome, so they are like to remain for ever, unless there be some other person in the Godhead to be sent, to make up Pythagoras his τετράκτυς[q], there is no new way imaginable to be found out; and that perhaps is the reason of those peremptory denunciations of Christ against them that sin against the Holy Ghost, against that administration of grace entrusted to Him, that there shall be never any remission for them, in this world or in another, i. e. either by way of justification here, or glorification at that grand manumission hereafter. And that may serve for a second proof of the proposition, that if for all, the duty of a Christian is not feasible, it must remain so for ever; an adumbration thereof you may see set down Heb. x. comparing the sixteenth with the twenty-sixth verse. In the sixteenth you have the second covenant described, and the condition of it in the verses following; and then, verse twenty-six, if after this we sin wilfully, then our estate becomes desperate, "there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation;" and he that takes not then quarter, accounted an adversary for ever; the apostate, whether he renounce his faith in fact or profession, must be a cast-away. [Mat. xii. 32.]

The third thing to be premised is, wherein this condition of the second covenant consists; and that is not in any rigour of legal performance,—that was the bloody purport of that old obligation that soon concluded us all under death irreversibly, —not in any Egyptian Pharaoh's tasks, a full tale of bricks without straw, without any materials to make them; no pharisaical burden laid on heavy, and no finger to help to bear it; but an "easy yoke," a "light burden," and not only light, but alleviating: he that was laden before is the lighter for this yoke, "Take My yoke, and you shall find rest." And therefore Christ thinks reasonable not to lay the yoke upon them as an injunction,—as the worldly fashion is,—but to commend it to them as a thing that any prudent man would be glad to take up; in the beginning of the verse, "Take My yoke upon you." [Mat. xxiii. 4.] Mat. xi. 30. ver. 29.

[q] [Cf. Jamblich. vita Pythag., c. 150, 162. et Carm. Aur. ver. 47. et Hierocl. in eund.]

In a word, it consists in the embracing of Christ in all His offices, the whole person of Christ; but especially as He is typically described in Zachary, a crowned Jesus, a Priest upon a throne; His sceptre joined to His ephod, to rule and receive tribute, as well as sacrifice, and satisfy, and reconcile. *Consilium pacis inter ambo ea,* those two offices of His reconciled in the same, our Priest become our King, "that being delivered, we may serve Him,"—in the other Zachary's phrase, delivered without fear, serve Him,—"in holiness and righteousness:" the performance of that duty that Christ enables to perform; the sincerity of the honest heart; the doing what our Christian strength will reach to, and humbly setting the rest on Christ's score. And then when that which can be done is sure to be accepted, there is no room left for pretended impossibilities. Nay, because those things which there is a logical possibility for us to do, and strength sufficient suppeditated, it is not yet morally possible to do all our lives long without any default; because, as Parisiensis[s] saith, even the habit of grace, in the regenerate heart, is, as long as a man carries flesh about him, as an armed man, *positus in lubrico,* set to fight in a slippery place, all his armour and valour will not secure him from a fall; or again, as the general of a factious or false-hearted army, a party of insidious flesh at home, which will betray to the weaker enemy that comes unanimous; or as a warrior on a tender-mouthed horse, impatient of discipline or check, is fetched over sometimes for all his strength and armour; because, I say, there is none but offend sometimes, even against his power; there is therefore bound up in this new volume of ordinances, an ἐπίνομις, a "new testament," a codicil of repentance added to the testament; that plank for shipwrecked souls[t], that city of refuge, that sanctuary for the man-slayer, after sin committed. And then, if sincere obedience be all that is required, and that exclude no Christian living, be he never so weak, but the false, faithless hypocrite; if repentance will repair the faults of that, and that exclude none but him that lives and dies indulgent in sin, the common prostitute, final impenitent infidel: if whatsoever be wanting be made over in the demise of the covenants, and whatsoever

Zach. vi. 11, 13.

Luke i. 74.

[Num. xxxv. 6.]

[s] [Gulielmus Alvernus Parisiensis De tentationibus et resistentiis, cap. i. prope fin. Op., tom. i. p. 299.]

[t] [See Pract. Catech., sect. v. p. 129.]

we are enabled to do accepted in the condition of it; then certainly no man that advises with these premises, and so understands what is the meaning of the duty, can ever doubt any longer of the *πάντα ἰσχύω*, the "omnipotence of the Christian," his sufficiency from Christ to perform his whole duty. Which is the sum of the conclusion of the second Arausican council held against Pelagius[u], *c. ult.*[v] *Secundum fidem Catholicam credimus, quod accepta per baptismum gratia omnes baptizati Christo auxiliante et cooperante quæ ad salutem pertinent possint et debeant* (*si fideliter laborare voluerint*) *adimplere.* The not observing of which is, I conceive, the fomenter of all that unkindly heat of those involved disputes, whether a regenerate man *in via,* can fulfil the law of God; of that collision concerning merits, concerning venial and mortal sin, justification by works, or faith, or both; all which upon the grounds premised, will to any intelligent sober Christian, a friend of truth and a friend of peace, be most evidently composed. To bring down this thesis to these several hypotheses, this time or place will not permit; I shall be partial to this part of my text, if I pass not with full speed to that which remains, the third proposition.

That the strength and power being thus bestowed, the work is the work of a Christian, of the *suppositum,* the man strengthened and assisted by Christ. "I can," &c.

I, not I alone, abstracted from Christ, nor I principally, and Christ only in *subsidiis,* to facilitate that to me which I was not quite able thoroughly to perform without help,—which deceitful consideration drew on Pelagius himself, that was first only for nature, at last to take in one after another five subsidiaries more; but only as so many horses to draw together in the chariot with nature[w], being so pursued by the councils and fathers, from one hold to another, till he was at last almost deprived of all; acknowledging, saith St. Austin[x], *divinæ*

[u] Vid. Vossii Histor. Pelagian., p. 315. [lib. iii. pars 2. This council is quoted in Epicrisis. 7.]

[v] [Concil. Arausic. II. (A.D. 528,) can. ult.; Concilia, tom. iv. col. 1672, B.]

[w] [See Vossii Hist. Pelag. ubi supra, Theses, ii., iii., iv., where this metaphor is used.]

[x] ['Nos,' inquit (Pelagius), 'sic tria ista distinguimus, et certum velut in ordinem digesta partimur. Primo loco posse statuimus, secundo velle, tertio esse. Posse in natura, velle in arbitrio, esse in effectu locamus. Primum illud, id est, posse, ad Deum pro-

gratiæ adjutorium ad posse; and then had not the devil stuck close to him at the exigence, and held out at the *velle et operari*, he might have been in great danger to have lost a heretic;—but I, absolutely impotent in myself to any supernatural duty, being then rapt above myself, strengthened by Christ's perpetual influence, having all my strength and ability from Him, am then by that strength able to do all things myself. As in the old oracle the god inspired and spake in the ear of the prophet, and then the Vates spoke under from thence, called *ὑποφήτης*, echoed out that voice aloud which he had received by whisper, a kind of scribe, or crier, or herald, to deliver out as he was inspired; the principal, *θεὸς*, a god, or oracle; the prophet *ἔνθεος, ἐνθυσιασμένος*, an inspired enthusiast, dispensing out to his credulous clients all that the oracle did dictate; or as the earth, which is cold and dry in its elementary constitution, and therefore bound up to a necessity of perpetual barrenness, having neither of those two procreative faculties, heat or moisture, in its composition; but then by the beams of the sun and neighbourhood of water, or to supply the want of that, rain from heaven to satisfy its thirst, this cold dry element begins to teem, carries many mines of treasure in the womb, many granaries of fruit in its surface, and in event, *ἰσχύει πάντα*, contributes all that we can crave, either to our need or luxury. Now though all this be done by those foreign aids, as principal, nay, sole efficients of this fertility in the earth to conceive, and of its strength to bring forth, yet the work of bringing forth is attributed to
Heb. vi. 7. the earth, as to the immediate parent of all. Thus it is God's work, *καταφυτεῦσαι καὶ ποτίσαι*, saith Cyril[y], to plant and water, and that He doth mediately by Apollos and Paul: yea, and to give the increase, that belongs to Him immediately; neither to man nor angel, but only *ad agricolam Trinitatem*, saith St. Austin[z]; but after all this *σὸν δὲ καρποφορῆσαι*,

prie pertinet, qui illud creaturæ suæ contulit: duo vero reliqua, hoc est velle et esse, ad hominem referenda sunt, quia de arbitrii fonte descendunt. Ergo in voluntate et opere bono laus hominis est: immo et hominis, et Dei, qui ipsius voluntatis et operis possibilitatem dedit, quique ipsam possibilitatem gratiæ suæ adjuvat semper auxilio.'—Pelagii verba citat. ap. S. Augustin., lib. de Gratia Christi, cap. 4. vid. cap. 5. Op., tom. x. col. 231, 232.]

[y] [*αὐτοῦ μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ τὸ καταφυτεῦσαι καὶ ποτίσαι, σὸν δὲ τὸ καρποφορῆσαι.*—S. Cyrilli H. Catech. i. c. 4. p. 18, B.]

[z] [S. August. in S. Joan. Evang., c. xv. Tract. lxxx. § 2. Op., tom. iii. col. 703, A.]

though God give the increase, thou must bring forth the fruit. The Holy Ghost overshadowed Mary, and "she was found with child," εὑρέθη, she was found; no more attributed to her; the Holy Ghost the principal, nay, sole agent in the work, and she a pure virgin still[a]: and yet it is the angel's divinity, "that Mary shall conceive and bring forth a son." All the efficiency from the Holy Ghost, and *partus ventrem*, the work attributed, and that truly to Mary, the subject in whom it was wrought; and therefore is she called by the ancients not only *officina miraculorum*, and ἐργαστήριον ἁγίου πνεύματος, "the shop of miracles," and "the work-house of the Holy Ghost," as the rhetoric of some have set it, but by the councils[b], that were more careful in their phrases, χριστοτόκος and θεοτόκος, not only the conduit through which He passed, but the parent of whose substance He was made. And thus in the production of all spiritual actions, the principal sole efficient of all is Christ and His Spirit; all that is conceived in us is of the Holy Ghost: the holy principle, holy desire, holy action, the *posse, et velle, et operari*, all of Him. But then being so overshadowed, the soul itself conceives; being still assisted, carries in the womb, and by the same strength at fulness of time, as opportunities do midwife them out, brings forth Christian spiritual actions; and then as Mary was the mother of God, so the Christian soul is the parent of all its divine Christian performances; Christ the father, that enables with His Spirit; and the soul the mother, that actually brings forth.

Mat. i. 18. Luke i. 31. Phil. ii. 12.

And now that we may begin to draw up towards a conclusion, two things we may raise from hence by way of inference to our practice.

1. Where all the Christian's non-proficiency is to be charged, either, 1. upon the habitual hardness, or 2. the sluggishness, or 3. the rankness of his own wretchless heart.

1. Hardness; that for all the seed that is sown, the softening dew that distils, and rain that is poured down, the en-

[a] [Forma præcessit in carne Christi quam in nostra fide spiritaliter agnoscamus. Nam Christus filius Dei secundum carnem de Spiritu Sancto conceptus et natus est. Carnem autem illam nec concipere Virgo posset aliquando nec parere nisi ejusdem carnis Spiritus Sanctus operaretur exortum. Sic ergo in hominis corde nec concipi fides poterit nec augeri, nisi eam Spiritus Sanctus infundat et nutriat.—Fulgentius Ruspensis de Incarnatione et gratia, c. 20. ap. Bibl. Patr. Galland., tom. xi. p. 243, C.]

[b] [e. g. Concil. Ephes. et Constant. II.]

livening influences that are dispensed among us, yet the *σκληρότης ὑστήρας*, "the hardness and toughness of the womb," *ξηρὰ γῆ οὐ πάνυ ἐκτρέφουσα*, that dry unnutrifying earth in the philosopher's, or in Christ's dialect stony ground, resists all manner of conception, will not be hospitable, yield any entertainment, even to these angelical guests, though they
[Gen. xix.] come as to Lot's house in Sodom only to secure the owner from most certain destruction. This is the reason that so much of God's husbandry among us returns Him so thin, so unprofitable an harvest, *ceciderunt in petrosa;* and it is hard finding any better tillage now-a-days; the very Holy Land, the milk and honey of Canaan is degenerate, they say, into this composition; and herein is a marvellous thing, that where God hath done all that any man, if it were put to his own partial judgment, would think reasonable for Him to do for His vineyard, gathered out stones, those seeds of natural hard-
Isa. v. 2. ness, and, which deserves to be marked, built a wine-press, a sure token that He expected a vintage in earnest, not only manured for fashion, or to leave them without excuse; yet for all these, *labruscas*, wild, juiceless grapes, heartless faith, unseasoned devotion, intemperate zeal, blind and perverse obedience, that under that name shall disguise and excuse disobedience; *tot genera labruscarum*, so many wild unsavoury fruits is the best return He can hear of.

One thing more let me tell you; it is not the original hardness of nature to which all this can be imputed; for, for the mollifying of that, all this gardening was bestowed; digging and gathering out, and indeed nothing more ordinary, than out of such "stones to raise up children unto Abraham." But it is the long habit and custom of sin which hath harassed out the soul, congealed that natural gravel, and improved it into a perfect quarry or mine; and it is not the preacher's charm, the annunciation of the gospel, "that power of God unto salvation," unto a Jew or heathen; it is not David's harp,—that could exorcise the evil spirit upon Saul,—not the every-day eloquence, even of the Spirit of God, that can in holy Esdras' phrase, "persuade them to salvation."

2. Sluggishness, and inobservances of God's seasons, and opportunities, and seed-times of grace. God may appear a thousand times, and not once find us in case to be parleyed

with: Christ comes but thrice to His disciples from His prayers in the garden, and that thrice He finds them asleep. Christ can be awake to come, and that in a more pathetical language, *sic non potuistis hora una*, as the vulgar most fully out of the Greek, "were you so unable to watch one hour?" The Pharisee can be awake to plot, Judas to betray, their joint vigils and *proparasceue* to that grand passover the slaying of the Lamb of God, and only the disciples they are asleep, "for their eyes were heavy," saith the text; and this heaviness of eyes, and heaviness of heart—whereupon *βαρυκάρδιοι* in the LXXII is ordinarily set for sinners—is the depriving us many times, not only of Christ, but of His Spirit too. So many apologies and excuses to Him when he calls, "a little more sleep and slumber, and folding of the hands;" such drowsy-hearted slovenly usage when He comes, that no wonder if we grieve Him out of our houses; such contentedness in our present servile estate, that if a jubilee should be proclaimed from heaven, a general manumission of all servants from these galleys of sin, we would be ready with those servants for whom Moses makes a provision, to come and tell Him plainly, "we will not go out free," be bored through the ear to be slaves for ever.

Mat. xxvi.

[Ps. iv. 3.]

[Prov. xxiv. 33.]

Ex. xxi. 6.

3. Rankness, and a kind of spiritual sin of Sodom; "pride and fulness of bread," abusing the grace of God into wantonness; either to the ostentatious setting themselves out before men, or else the feeding themselves up to that high flood of spiritual pride and confidence, that it will be sure to impostumate in the soul. Some men have been fain to be permitted to sin, for the abating this humour in them by way of phlebotomy; St. Peter, I think, is an example of that. Nebuchadnezzar was turned a grazing to cure his secular pride; and St. Paul, I am sure, had a messenger sent to him to that purpose, by way of prevention, that he might not be exalted above measure; and when he thought well of it, he receives it as a present sent him from heaven, *ἐδόθη μοὶ σκόλοψ*, reckons of it as a gift of grace, or if you will, a medicinal dose, or recipe, but rather a plaster, or outward application, which, *per antiperistasin*, would drive in his spiritual heat, and so help his weak digestion of grace, make him the more thriving Christian for ever after.

[Ezek. xvi. 46.]

[2 Cor. xii. 7.]

The issue of this first inference is this, that it is not God's partial or niggardly dispensing of grace; but either our unpreparedness to receive, or preposterous giddiness in making use of it, which is the cause either of consumption or aposthume in the soul, either starving or surfeiting the Christian.

The second inference, how all the Christian's diligence is to be placed; what he hath to do in this wayfare to his home. And that is the same that all travellers have, first, to be alway upon his feet, advancing minutely something toward his next stage. See that we be employed, or else how can God assist; we must ἐργάζειν, or else He cannot συνεργεῖν; and see that we be employed aright, or else God must not, cannot assist. The sluggard's devotions can never get into God's presence; they want heat and spirit to lift them up, and activity to press and enforce them when they are there. It was an impression in the very heathen, Porcius Cato in the history[c], that watching, and acting, and advising aright, and not emasculate womanish supplications alone, were the means whereby God's help is obtained, *Ubi socordiæ atque ignaviæ tradideris, frustra Deos implores.* And Hierocles[d] to the same purpose, that their sacrifices are but πυρὸς τροφὴ, "food for the fire" to devour; and their richest offerings to the temple but a spoil to the sacrilegious to prey on. And the sinner's devotions must not be entertained there; they would even profane that holy place. He that was born blind, saw thus much, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any be a worshipper of God, and doth His will, him doth God hear."

[Phil. ii. 12, 13.]

John ix. 31.

And then secondly, to get furnished, whatever it cost him, of all provision and directions for his way; and so this will conclude in a double exhortation, both combined in that of David to Solomon, when all materials were laid in, and artificers provided for the building of the temple, and wanted nothing but a cheerful leader to actuate and enliven them, "Arise therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with thee."

1 Chron. xxii. 16.

1. To set about the business as thine own work, as the task that will not be required of the Spirit of God, of the Scrip-

[c] [Sallust. de Catilin. Conj., c. 52.]

[d] [Hierocles in Aur. Carm. Pythag., ver. 1. In the first copy of the Sermons the name in the text was Jerome, by an obvious mistake; the marginal reference was Hier. in Aur. Car. Pyth.; in Fulman's edition "f. Hierocles" was added in the margin.—The text has now been corrected.]

ture, of the preacher, but of thee. When it is performed thou wouldst be loth that God should impute all to Himself, crown His own graces, ordinances, instruments, and leave thee as a cypher unrewarded. And therefore, whilst it is a performing, be content to believe that somewhat belongs to thee, that thou hast some hardship to undergo, some diligence to maintain, some evidences of thy good husbandry, thy wise managing of the talent; and in a word, of faithful service to shew here, or else when the *euge bone serve* is pronounced, thou wilt not be able confidently to answer to thy name. *Οὐ τὰ ὅπλα ἴσχυς ἄνδρων, ἀλλὰ τῶν ὅπλων οἱ ἄνδρες*, said the Milesians to Brutus[e]; "All the weapons in the world will not defend the man, unless the man actuate, and fortify, and defend his weapons." Thy strength consists all in the strength of Christ, but you will never walk, or be invulnerable in the strength of that, till you be resolved that the good use—and so the strength of that strength to thee—is a work that remains for thee. If it were not, that exhortation of the Apostle's would never have been given in form of exhortation to the Christian, but of prayer only to Christ, "Stand fast, quit yourselves like men, be strong." 1 Cor. xvi. 13.

Lastly, or indeed that which must be both first and last, commensurate to all our diligence, the *viaticum* that you must carry with you, is the prayers of humble gasping souls. Humble, in respect of what grace is received; be sure not to be exalted with that consideration. Gasping for what supply may be obtained from that eternal unexhausted fountain; and these prayers not only that God will give, but, as Josephus makes mention of the Jews' liturgy, *ὡς δέχεσθαι δύνασθαι*, "that they may receive." And as Porphyry[f], of one kind of sacrifice, *διὰ χρείαν ἀγαθῶν*, "that they may use;" and every of us fructify in some proportion answerable to our irrigation.

Now the God of all grace, who hath called us into His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after that you have obeyed awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

To Him, be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.

[e] Ἐπιστ. v.

[f] [Porphyrius, De Abstinentia, lib. ii. § 24.]

SERMON XV.

PROV. i. 22.

How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?

THAT Christ is the best, and Satan the worst chosen master, is one of the weightiest and yet least considered aphorisms of the gospel. Were we but so just and kind to ourselves as actually to pursue what upon judgment should appear to be most for our interests, even in relation to this present life; and—without making heaven the principle of our motion—but only think never the worse of a worldly temporary bliss, not quarrel against it for being attended with an eternal; were we but patient of so much sobriety and consideration, as calmly to weigh and ponder what course, in all probability, were most likely to befriend and oblige us here, to make good its promise of helping us to the richest acquisitions, the vastest possessions and treasures of this life, I am confident our Christ might carry it from all the world besides, our Saviour from all the tempters and destroyers; and—besides so many other considerable advantages—this superlative transcendent one of giving us the only right to the reputation and title of wisdom here in these books, be acknowledged the Christian's, i. e. the disciple's monopoly and inclosure; and folly the due brand and reproach and portion of the ungodly.

The wisest man, beside Christ, that was ever in the world, you may see by the text had this notion of it, brings in wisdom by a *prosopopœia*,—i. e. either Christ Himself, or the saving doctrine of heaven, in order to the regulating of our lives, or again, wisdom in the ordinary notion of it,—libelling and reproaching the folly of all the sorts of sinners in the world,

posting from the "without in the streets" to the assemblies of [ver. 20.] the greatest renown, "the chief place of concourse," i.e. clearly [ver. 21.] their sanhedrim, or great council, from thence to the places of judicature; for that is, "the openings of the gates," nay, to "the city," κατ' ἐξοχήν, the metropolis and glory of the nation; and crying out most passionately, most bitterly against all in the loudest language of contumely and satire that ever Pasquin or Marforius were taught to speak. And the short of it is, that the pious Christian is the only tolerable wise; and the world of unchristian sinners are a company of the most wretched, simple, atheistical fools, which cannot be thought on without a passion and inculcation, "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and ye scorners," &c.

The first part of this verse, though it be the cleanest of three expressions, hath yet in it abundantly enough of rudeness, for an address to any civil auditory. I shall therefore contain my discourse within those staunchest limits, "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?" And in them observe only these three particulars.

1. The character of the ungodly man's condition, contained in these two expressions, simple ones, and simplicity; "How long, ye simple," &c.

2. The aggravation of the simplicity, and so heightening of the character, and that by two further considerations.

First, from their loving of that which was so unlovely, that they should be so simple as to love simplicity.

Secondly, from their continuance in it, that they should not at length discern their error, that they should love simplicity so long.

3. The passion that it produceth in the speaker—be it wisdom, or be it Christ, or be it Solomon—to consider it; and that passion, whether of pity, that men should be such fools; or of indignation, that they should love and delight in it so long. "How long," &c.

I begin first with the first; the character of sin and sinners, i. e. of the ungodly man's condition, contained in these two expressions: simple ones, and simplicity. "How," &c.

Four notions we may have of these words, which will all be appliable to this purpose: you shall see them as they rise.

First, as the calling one simple is a word of reproach or contumely, the very same with the calling one *ῥάκα*, i.e. "empty, brainless person," the next degree to the *μῶρε*, or "thou fool," in the end of that and this verse. And then the thing that we are to observe from thence is, what a reproachful thing an unchristian life is; what a contumelious, scandalous quality.

[Mat. v. 22.]

A reproach to nature first, to our human kind, which was an honourable reverend thing in paradise, before sin came in to humble and defame it; a solemn, severe law-giver, *σύστημα λογικῶν νοημάτων*, in Clemens; the system or pandect of all rational notions, *σύμψηφος τῷ Θεῷ*, that either likes or commends all that now Christ requires of us, bears witness to the word of God that all His commandments are righteous; and so is by our unnatural sins, those *ἄτιμα πάθη*, ignoble dishonourable affections of ours,—which have coupled together sins and kennels, adulterers and dogs,—put to shame and rebuke, dishonoured and degraded, as it were. Not all the ugliness and poison of the toad hath so deformed that kind of creatures, brought it so low in *genere entium*, as the deformed malignant condition of sin hath brought down the very nature and kind of men, making them *τέκνα ὀργῆς*, the children, i. e. the objects of all the wrath and hatred in the world.

[Rom. i. 26. *πάθη ἀτίμιας.*]

[Rev. xxii. 15.]

[Eph. ii. 3.]

2. A reproach to our souls, those immortal vital creatures inspired into us by heaven, and now raised higher, superinspired by the grace of Christ; which are then, as Mezentius's invention of punishment, bound up close with a carcase of sin, tormented and poisoned with its stench, buried in that noisomest vault or charnel-house. It was an admirable golden saying of the Pythagoreans[a], the *αἰσχύνεο σαυτὸν*, what a restraint of sin it would be if a man would remember the reverence he ought unto himself, and *ἡ ψυχή σου*[b] was their own explication of it; the soul within thee is that self to whom all that dread and awe and reverence is due. And O what an impudent affront, what an irreverential profaning of that sacred celestial beam within thee,—that *ἀπαύγασμα θεοῦ*, as

[a] [Pythag. Carm. Aur., ver. 12.] [b] [Hierocl. in Carm. Aur. Pythag. ad ver. 25.]

the philosophers call it,—is every paltry oath, or rage, or lust, that the secure sinner is so minutely guilty of! Every sin, say the schools, being in this respect a kind of idolatry, an incurvation and prostitution of that heavenly creature—ordained to have nothing but divinity in its prospect—to the meanest, vilest heathen worship, the crocodile, the cat, the scarabee, the *dii stercorii*, the most noisome abominations under heaven.

3. A reproach to God, who hath owned such scandalous creatures, hath placed us in a degree of divinity next unto angels, nay, to Christ, that by assuming that nature and dying for it hath made it emulate the angelical eminence, and been in a manner liable to the censure of partiality in so doing; in advancing us so unworthy, dignifying us so beyond the merit of our behaviours, honouring us so unproportionably above what our actions can own, "whilst those that are in scarlet embrace the dunghill," as it is in the Lamentations, those that are honoured by God, act so dishonourably. It was Plato's[c] affirmation of God in respect of men, that He was a Father, when of all other creatures He was but a maker; and it is Arrian's[d] superstruction on that, that remembering that we are the sons of God, we should never admit any base degenerous thought, any thing reproachful to that stock, unworthy of the grandeur of the family from whence we are extracted. If we do, it will be more possible for us to profane and embase heaven, than for the reputation of that parentage of ours to ennoble us: the scandal that such a degenerous, disingenuous progeny will bring on the house from whence we came, is a kind of sacrilege to heaven, a violation to those sacred mansions, a proclaiming to the world what colonies of polluted creatures came down from thence, though there be a *nulla retrorsum*[e], no liberty for any such to return thither. Lam. iv. 5.

Lastly, it is a reproach to the very beasts, and the rest of the creation which are designed by God the servants and slaves of sinful man; which may justly take up the language of the slave to his vicious master in the satirist[f], *Tune mihi*

[c] [See Plat. Sophist. i. p. 234.]
[d] [Arrian. Dissert. Epictet., lib. i. c. 3.]
[e] [Horat. Epist. i. 1. 75.]
[f] [Horat. Sat. ii. 7. 75.]

dominus? Art thou my lord, who art so far a viler bondslave than those over whom thou tyrannizest? a slave to thy passion, thy lust, thy fiends, who hast so far dethroned thyself that the beast becomes more beast when it remembers thee to have any degree of sovereignty over it?

Put these four notions together, and it will give you a view of the first intimation of this text, the baseness and reproachfulness of the sinner's course: and unless he be the most abject, wretchless, forlorn sot in the whole creation; unless he be turned all into earth or phlegm; if he hath in his whole composition one spark of ambition, of emulation, of ordinary sense of honour; the least warmth of spirit; impatience of being the only degenerous wretch of the earth now, and of hell to all eternity; if he be not absolutely arrived to Arrian's[h] ἀπολίθωσις τοῦ πρακτικοῦ,—his practical as well as judicative faculty quite quarried and petrified within him,—
Mark iii. 5. to that πώρωσις in the Gospel, that direct ferity and brutality, in comparison of which the most crest-fallen numbness, palsy or lethargy of soul, were dignity and preferment; if he be not all that is deplorable already, and owned to be so for ever; he will certainly give one vital spring, one last plunge, to recover some part of the honour and dignity of his creation; break off that course that hath so debased him, precipitated him into such an abyss of filth and shame, if it be but in pity to the nature, the soul, the god, the whole creation about
Isa. iv. 1. him; that like the seven importunate women lay hold on this one insensate person in the eager clamorous style of the אסף חרפתנו "take away our reproach." And let that serve for a first part of the sinner's character, the consideration of his reproachful, scandalous, offensive state, which might in all reason work some degree of good on him in the first place.

A second notion of this phrase, and degree of this character, is the giddiness and unadvisedness of the sinner's course; as simplicity ordinarily signifies senselessness, precipitousness, as Trismegistus defines it, μανίας εἶδος, a "species of madness" in one place, and τὶς μέθη, a "kind of drunkenness" in another, a wild irrational acting, and this doth express itself in our furious mischieving ourselves, in doing all quite contrary unto our own ends, our own aims, our own principles of

[h] Lib. i. cap. 5. [§ 3. ἐντρεπτικοῦ.]

action; and this you will see most visible in the particulars, in every motion, every turn of the sinner's life. As

I. In his malices, wherein he breathes forth such Ætnas of flames against others, you may generally mark it he hurts neither God nor man, but only himself. In every such hellish breathing, all that malignity of his cannot reach God; he is ἀπείραστος κακῶν, untemptable by evil in this other sense, I mean impenetrable by his malice. All that was shot up towards God comes down immediately on the sinner's own head; and for the man against whom he is enraged, whose blood he thirsts after, whose ruin he desires, he does him the greatest courtesy in the world, he is but blest by those curses; that honourable blissful estate that belongs to all poor persecuted saints—and consequently, the χαίρετε καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, matter of joy and exultation—is hereby become his portion; and that is the reason he is advised to do good to him by way of gratitude, to make returns of all civility and acknowledgments, not as to an enemy, but a benefactor, to bless and pray for him by whom he hath been thus obliged. Only this raving madman's own soul is that against which all these blows and malices rebound; the only true sufferer all this while; first, in the very meditating and designing the malice, all which space he lives not the life, but the hell of a fiend or devil,—that ἐχθρὸς ἀνὴρ, that "enemy-man," as he is called,—his namesake and parallel. And again, secondly, in the executing of it; that being one of the basest and most dishonourable employments; that of an ἄγγελος Σατᾶν, "an angel or officer of Satan's,"—to buffet some precious image of God,—which is to that purpose filled out of Satan's fulness, swollen with all the venomous humour that that fountain can afford to furnish and accommodate him for this enterprise. And then, lastly, after the satiating of his wrath, a bloated, guilty, unhappy creature, one that hath fed at the devil's table, swilled and glutted himself in blood, and now betrays it all in his looks and complexion.

[Jam. i. 13.]

[Mat. v. 12.]

[Mat. xiii. 28. ἄνθρωπος.]

[2 Cor. xii. 7.]

And as in our malices, so, secondly, in our loves, in our softer as well as our rougher passions, we generally drive quite contrary to our own ends and interests; and if we obtain, we find it experimentally the enjoyment of what we pursue most vehemently proves not only unsatisfactory, but grating, hath to the

vanity the addition of vexation also; not only the *τίνα τότε καρπὸν,* [Rom. vi. 21.] no manner of fruit, then at the point of enjoying an empty paltry nothing, but over and above, the *νῦν αἰσχύνεσθε,* shame and perturbation of mind, the gripings and *tormina* of a confounded conscience immediately consequent; and it would even grieve an enemy to hear the Apostle go on to the dear payment at the close for this sad nothing, the *τὸ τέλος θάνατος, ex abundanti,* [Rom. v. 23.] and over and above, the "end of those things is death." And oh what a simplicity is this! thus to seek out emptiness and death, when we think we are on one of our advantageous pursuits, in this "error of our ways," [Jam. v. 20.] as the wise man calls it, is sure a most prodigious mistake, a most unfortunate error; and to have been guilty of it more than once the most unpardonable simplicity.

From our loves proceeding to our hopes, which if it be any but the Christian hope, than this "hope on Him," i. e., hope on God, and that joined with purifying, it is in plain terms the greatest contrariety to itself, the perfectest desperateness; and for secular hopes the expectation of good, of advantages from this or that staff of Egypt, the depending on this, [Is. xxxvi. 7.] whether profane, or but ordinary innocent auxiliary, it is the forfeiting all our pretensions to that great aid of heaven,—as they say the loadstone draweth not when the adamant is near,—it is the taking us off from our grand trust and dependence, setting us up independent from God; and that must needs be the blasting of all our enterprises; that even lawful aid of the creature, if it be looked on with any confidence as our helper, *παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα,* [Rom. i. 25.] beside, or in separation from the Creator, is—and God is engaged in honour that it should be—struck presently from heaven, [Acts xii. 23.] eaten up with worms like Herod, when once its good qualities are deified; broken to pieces with the brazen serpent, burnt and stamped to powder with the golden calf: [Isa. i. 31.] and "the strong shall be as tow," the false idol strength is but a prize for a flash of lightning to prey on. And as St. Paul and Barnabas are fain to run in a passion upon the [Acts xiv. 15.] multitude that meant to do them worship, with a "Men and brethren," [Rev. xxii. 9.] &c., and the very angel to St. John, when he fell down before him, *vide ne feceris,* "see thou do it not;" for fear if he had been so mistaken by him he might have forfeited his angelical estate by that unluckiness; so certainly

[1 John iii. 3.]

the most honourable promising earthly help, if it be once looked on with a confidence or an adoration; if it steal off our eyes and hearts one minute from that sole waiting and looking on God; it is presently to expect a being thunderstruck from heaven, as hath been most constantly visible among us; and that is all we get by this piece of simplicity also.

And it were well when our worldly hopes have proved thus little to our advantage, our worldly fears, in the next place, might bring us in more profit. But alas! that passionate perturbation of our faculties stands us in no stead, but to hasten and bring our fears upon us, by precipitating them sometimes, casting ourselves into that abyss which we look on with such horror, running out to meet that danger which we would avoid so vehemently; sometimes dispiriting and depriving us of all those succours which were present to our rescue; the passion most treacherously betraying the aids which reason, if it had been allowed admission, was ready to have offered; but perpetually anticipating that misery which is the thing we fear, the terror itself being greater disease sometimes, constantly a greater reproach and contumely to a masculine spirit, than any of the evils we are so industrious to avoid. It is not a matter of any kind of evil report, really to have suffered, to have been squeezed to atoms by an unremediable evil, especially if it be for well-doing; but to have been sick of the fright, to have lavished our constancy, courage, conscience, and all, an Indian sacrifice to a sprite or mormo, *ne noceat,* to escape not a real evil, but only an apprehension or terror; this is a piece of the most destructive wariness, the *ἀσόφων ἀκρίβεια,* the greatest simplicity that can be. Wisd. xvii. 12.

I shall not enlarge the prospect any further, as easily I might, to our unchristian joys that do so dissolve, our unchristian sorrows that do so contract and shrivel up the soul; —and then, as Themison and his old sect of methodists resolved, that the *laxum* and *strictum,* the immoderate dissolution or constipation, were the principles and originals of all diseases in the world, so it will be likely to prove in our spiritual estate also;—nor again to our heathenish *ἐπιχαιρεκακίαι*[1], rejoicing at the mischiefs of other men; which directly

[1] [Arist. Rhet. ii. 9, 5; Eth. ii. 7, ad fin.]

transform us into fiends and furies, and wreak no malice on any but ourselves, leave us a wasted, wounded, prostitute, harassed conscience, to tire and gnaw upon its own bowels, and nothing else. I have exercised you too long with so trivial a subject, such an easy every-day's demonstration, the wicked man's contradictions to all his aims, his acting quite contrary to his very designs, a second branch of his character, a second degree and advancement of his simplicity.

The third notion of simplicity is that of the idiot, the natural, as we call him, he that hath some eminent failing in his intellectuals, the *læsum principium*, the pitcher or wheel, I mean the faculty of understanding or reason, broken or wounded at the fountain or cistern; and so nothing but animal, sensitive actions to be had from him. And of this kind of imperfect creatures it will be perhaps worth your marking, that the principal faculty which is irrecoverably wanting in such, and by all teaching irreparable and unimprovable, is the power of numbering; I mean not that of saying numbers by rote,—for that is but an act of sensitive memory,—but that of applying them to matter; and from thence that of intellectual numbering, i. e. of comparing and measuring, judging of proportions, pondering, weighing, discerning the differences of things by the power of the judicative faculty; which two seem much more probably the propriety and difference of a man from a beast, than that which the philosophers[k] have fancied, the power of laughing or discoursing. To reckon and compute is that which in men of an active clear reason is perpetually in exercising *per modum actus eliciti*, that naturally of its own accord, without any command or appointment of the will, pours itself out upon every object. We shall oft deprehend ourselves numbering the panes in the window, the sheep in the field; measuring every thing we come near with the eye, with the hand; singing tunes, forming every thing into some kind of metre,—which are branches still of that faculty of numbering,—when we have no kind of end or design in doing it. And this is of all things in the world the most impossible for a mere natural or idiot. And so you have here the third, and that is the prime, most remarkable degree of simplicity, that the un-

[Eccles. xii. 6.]

[k] [Porphyrii Isagoge, cap. 4.]

christian fool, the *ἀνὴρ ψυχικὸς*, whether you render it the animal or natural man, is guilty of; that piteous *læsum principium*, that want of the faculty of weighing, pondering, or numbering; that weakness or no kind of exercise of the judicative faculty, from whence all his simplicity and impiety proceeds. The Hebrews have a word to signify a wise man, which hath a near affinity with that of weighing and pondering, משכיל from שכל, which hath no difference in sound from that which signifies *ponderavit*, whence the *shekel*, the known Hebrew word is deduced, to note, as the Psalmist saith, that "He that is wise, will ponder things." All the folly and unchristian sin comes from want of pondering; and all the Christian wisdom, piety, discipleship, consists in the exercise of this faculty. Whatsoever is said most honourably of faith in Scripture, that sets it out in such a grandeur as the greatest designer and author of all the high acts of piety, and as the conqueror over the world, is clearly upon this score, as faith is the spiritual wisdom or prudence,—for so it is best defined,—and as by comparing, and proportioning, and weighing together the promises, or the commands, or the terrors of the gospel on one side, with the promises, the prescriptions, and terrors of the world on the other, it pronounces that handwriting on the wall against the latter of them, the "*Mene, tekel, upharsin.*" They are weighed in the balance and found most pitifully light, in comparison of those which Christ hath to weigh against them; and so the kingdom, the usurped supremacy,—that they have so long pretended to in the inconsiderate simple precipitous world,—is by a just judgment torn and departed from them.

[1 Cor. ii. 14. ἄνθρωπος.]

[Ps. cvii. 43.]

Heb. xi.

1 John v. 4.

[Dan. v. 25.]

Will you begin with the promises, and have but the patience awhile to view the scales, and when you have set the beam even, removed the carnal or secular prejudices,—which have so possessed most of us that we can never come to a right balancing of any thing; the beam naturally inclines still as our customary wonts and prepossessions will have it,—when, I say, you have set the beam impartially, throw but into one scale the promises of Christ, those of His present, of His future bliss; of present, "such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor entered into the heart of man to conceive," prepared for them that love God, and that at the very minute

1 Cor. ii. 9.

of loving Him,—the word ἡτοιμασμένα, referring to the manna of old; the Hebrew deduced from מנה, *præparavit*, and therefore described by the author of the book of Wisdom, according to that literal denotation of the Hebrew, ἄρτος ἕτοιμος ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ, bread baked, as it were, and sent down ready from heaven to the true Israelite,—the gust of every Christian duty being so pleasurable and satisfactory to the palate, as it were, of our human nature; so consonant to every rational soul, that it cannot practise or taste without being truly joyed and ravished with it: and so that which was the Israelites' feast, the quails and manna, being become the Christians' every day ordinary diet, you will allow that to be of some weight or consideration, if there were nothing else but that present festival of a good conscience in the scale before you. But when to that you have further cast in the "glory, honour, immortality," which is on arrear for that Christian in another life, that infinite inestimable weight of that glory laid before us, as the reward of the Christian, for his having been content that Christ should shew him the way to be happy here and blessed eternally. And when that both present and future felicity is set off and heightened by the contrary, by "the indignation, and anger, and wrath," that is the portion of the atheistical fool, and which nothing could have helped us to escape, but this only Christian sanctuary; when the bliss of this Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, is thus improved by the news of the scorching of the Dives in that place of torments; and by all these together, the scale thus laded on one side, I shall then give the devil leave to help you to what weight he can in the other scale, be it his *totum hoc*, all the riches and glory of the whole world,—and not only that thousandth part of the least point of the map, which is all thou canst aspire to in his service,—and what is it all but the *bracteata felicitas*, in Seneca[l]; μυθικὴ μακαρία, in Nazianzen[m]; a little fictitious felicity, a little paltry trash, that nothing but the opinion of men hath made to differ from the most refuse stone, or dirt in the kennel; the richest gems, totally beholding to the simplicity and folly of men for their reputation and value in the world. Besides these, I presume the fancies ex-

Wisd. xvi. 20.

[Ex. xvi.]

[Rom. ii. 7.]

[Rom. ii. 8.]

[l] [Seneca, Epist. 115.]

[m] [S. Greg. Naz. Epist. xxvi. ad Amphiloch. Op., tom. ii. p. 23, B.]

pect to have liberty to throw in all the pleasures and joys, the ravishments and transportations of all the senses; and truly, that is soon done; all the true joy that a whole age of carnality affords any man, if you but take along with it—as you cannot choose but do in all conscience—the satieties, and loathings, and pangs, that inseparably accompany it,—the leaven as well as the honey, under which the pleasures of sin are thought to be prohibited,—it will make but a pitiful addition in the scales, so many pounds less than nothing is the utmost that can be affirmed of it; and when you have fetched out your last reserve, all the painted air, the only commodity behind that you have to throw into that scale, the reputation and honour of a gallant vainglorious sinner, that some one fool or madman may seem to look on with some reverence; you have then the utmost of the weight that that scale is capable of; and the difference so vast betwixt them, such an inconsiderable proportion of straw, stubble, to such whole mines and rocks of gold and silver and precious stones, that no man that is but able to deal in plain numbers—no need of logarithms or algebra—can mistake in the judgment, or think that there is any profit, any advantage "in gaining the whole world," if accompanied with the least hazard or possibility of "losing his own soul:" and therefore the running that adventure is the greatest idiotism, the most deplorable, woeful simplicity in the world.

Lev. ii. 11.

[Mat. xvi. 26.]

The same proportion would certainly be acknowledged in the second place, betwixt the commands of Christ on one side, high, rational, venerable commands, that he that thinks not himself so strictly obliged to observe cannot yet but revere Him that brought them into the world, and deem them *νόμον βασιλικὸν*, "a royal and a gallant law," whilst all the whole volume or code of the law of the members hath not one ingenuous dictate, one tolerable, rational proposal in it, only a deal of savage drudgery to be performed to an impure tyrant, —sin and pain being of the same date in the world, and the Hebrew אוֹן signifying both,—and the more such burdens undergone, the more mean submissions still behind; no end of the tale of brick to one that is once engaged under such Egyptian kiln and task-masters.

[Jam. ii. 8.]

And for the terrors in the last place, there are none but

those of the Lord, that are fit to move or to persuade any: the utmost secular fear is so much more impendent over Satan's than God's clients,—the killing of the body, the far more frequent effect of that which had first the honour to bring death into the world: the devil owning the title of destroyer, *abaddon*, and ἀπολλύων, and inflicting diseases generally on those whom he possessed, and Christ, that other of the ἰατρὸς and σωτὴρ, the physician and the Saviour, that hath promises of long life annexed to some specials of His service,—that if it were reasonable to fear those that can kill the body, and afterwards have no more that they can do,—i. e. are able by the utmost of their malice, and God's permission, but to land thee safe at thy fair haven, to give thee heaven and bliss before thy time, instead of the many lingering deaths that this life of ours is subject to,—yet there were little reason to fear or suspect the fate in God's service, far less than in those steep precipitous paths which the devil leads us through. And therefore to be thus low-bellied with panic frights, to be thus tremblingly dismayed where there is no place of fear, and to ride on intrepid on the truest dangers, as the barbarians in America do on guns, is a mighty disproportion of men's faculties, a strange superiority of fancy over judgment, that may well be described by a defect in the power of numbering, that discerns no difference between ciphers and millions, but only that the noughts are a little the blacker, and the more formidable. And so much for the third branch of this character.

[Rev. ix. 11.]

[Mat. x. 28.]

There is yet a fourth notion of simplicity, as it is contrary to common ordinary prudence, that by which the politician and thriving man of this world expects to be valued, the great dexterity and managery of affairs, and the business of this world; wherein let me not be thought to speak paradoxes, if I tell you with some confidence that the wicked man is this only impolitic fool, and the Christian generally the most dexterous, prudent, practical person in the world; and the safest motto that of the *virtutem violenter retine*, the keeping virtue with the same violence that heaven is to be taken with. Not that the Spirit of Christ infuses into him the subtleties and crafts of the wicked, gives him any principles, or any excuse for that greater portion of the serpentine wisdom;

[Mat. xi. 12.]

but because honesty is the most gainful policy, the most thriving thorough prudence, that will carry a man further than any thing else. That old principle in the mathematics, that the right line comes speediliest to the journey's end, being, in spite of Machiavel, a maxim in politics also: and so will prove till Christ shall resign and give up to Satan the economy of the world. Some examples it is possible there may be of the *prosperum scelus*, the thriving of villainy for a time, and so of the present advantages that may come in to us by our secular contrivances; but sure this is not the lasting course, but only an anomaly or irregularity, that cannot be thought fit to be reckoned of in comparison of the more constant promises, the long life in a Canaan of milk and honey, that the Old and New Testament both have ensured upon the meek disciple. [Ps. xxxvii. 11; Mat. v. 5.]

And I think a man might venture the experiment to the testimony and trial of these times, that have been deemed most unkind and unfavourable to such innocent Christian qualities; that those that have been most constant to the strict, stable, honest principles, have thrived far better by the equable figure than those that have been most dexterous in changing shapes, and so are not the most unwise, ἐν γενεᾷ ταύτῃ, if there were never another state of retributions but this. Whereas it is most scandalously frequent and observable that the great politicians of this world are baffled and outwitted by the providence of heaven, sell their most precious souls for nought, and have not the luck to get any money for them; the most unthrifty, improvident merchandise, that כסל, "folly," which the LXXII render σκάνδαλον, "scandal:" the most piteous, offensive folly, the wretchedest simplicity in the world. [Luke xvi. 8.] Ps. xlix. 13.

You would easily believe it should not stand in need of a further aggravation, and yet now you are to be presented with one in my text, by way of heightening of the character, and that was my second particular, that at first I promised you, made up of two further considerations; first, the loving of that which is so unlovely; secondly, the continuing in the passion so long, "How long, you simple ones, will you love," &c.

First, the degree and improvement of the atheist's folly

consists in the loving of it, that he can take a delight and complacency in his way: to be patient of such a coarse, gainless service; such scandalous, mean submissions had been reproach enough to any that had not divested himself of ingenuity and innocence together, and become one of Aristotle's[n] φύσει δοῦλοι, "natural slaves," which, if it signify any thing, denotes the fools and simple ones in this text, whom nature hath marked in the head for no very honourable employments. But from this passivity in the mines and galleys to attain to a joy and voluptuousness in the employment, to dread nothing but sabbatic years and jubilees, and with the crest-fallen slave to disclaim nothing but liberty and manumission, i. e. in effect, innocence, and paradise, and bliss; to court and woo Satan for the mansions in hell, and the several types and præludiums of them, the [Mat. xxiv. 8.] ἀρχαὶ ὠδίνων, "the initial pangs in this life," which he hath in his disposing, to be such a Platonic lover of stripes and chains, without intuition of any kind of reward, any present or future wages for all his patience, and as it follows, to hate knowledge and piety, hate it as the most treacherous enemy that means to undermine their hell, to force them out of their beloved Satan's embraces: this is certainly a very competent aggravation of the simplicity; and yet to see how perfect a character this is of the most of us, that have nothing to commend or even excuse in the most of those ways, on which we make no scruple to exhaust our souls, but only our kindness, irrational, passionate kindness and love toward them; and then that love shall cover a multitude of sins, supersede all the exceptions and quarrels that otherwise we should not choose but have to them. Could a man see any thing valuable or attractive in oaths and curses, in drunkenness and bestiality, (the sin, that when a Turk resolves to be guilty of he makes a fearful noise unto his soul to retire all into his feet, or as far off as it is possible, that it may not be within ken of that bestial prospect, as Busbequius tells us[o];) could any man endure the covetous man's

[n] [Arist. Polit. i. 5.]

[o] [Vidi senem quendam Constantinopoli: qui quum calicem sumsisset in manum ut biberet, magnos prius clamores edebat. Rogati a nobis amici cur ita faceret, respondebant eum his clamoribus commonitam velle animam, ut se reciperet in aliquem corporis angulum, aut prorsus emigraret, ne rea fieret ejus delicti, quod ipse erat ad-

sad galling mules, burdens of gold, his Achan's wedge that cleaves and rends asunder nations,—so that in the Hebrew that sin signifies "wounding" and "incision," and is alluded to by his "piercing himself through with divers sorrows,"—his very purgatories and limbos, nay, hell, as devouring and perpetual as it; and the no kind of satisfaction, so much as to his eye, from the vastest heaps or treasures; were he not in love with folly and ruin, had he not been drenched with philters and charms, had not the necromancer played some of his prizes on him, and as St. Paul saith of his Galatians, even "bewitched him to be a fool;" would we but make a rational choice of our sins, discern somewhat that were amiable before we let loose our passion on them, and not deal so blindly in absolute elections of the driest unsavoury sin that may but be called a sin,—that hath but the honour of affronting God and damning one of Christ's redeemed,—most of our wasting, sweeping sins, would have no manner of pretensions to us; and that you will allow to be one special accumulation of the folly and madness of these simple ones, that they thus love simplicity.

Joel ii. 8. 1 Tim. vi. 10. [Gal. iii. 1.]

The second aggravation is the continuance and duration of this fury, a lasting, chronical passion, quite contrary to the nature of passions, a flash of lightning, lengthened out a whole day together; that they should love simplicity so long.

It is the nature of acute diseases either to have intervals and intermissions, or else to come to speedy crises; and though these prove mortal sometimes, yet the state is not generally so desperate; and so it is with sins; many, the sharpest and vehementest indispositions of the soul—pure fevers of rage and lust—prove happily but flashing, short furies, are attended with an instant smiting of the heart, a hating and detesting our follies, a striking on the thigh in Jeremy, and in David's penitential style, a "so foolish was I and ignorant, even as a beast before Thee." And it were happy if our fevers had such cool seasons, such favourable, ingenuous intermissions as these. But for the hectic, continual fevers,—that like some weapons, the *ἀγγῶνες*, "barbed shafts" in use among the Franks in Agathias[p], being not

[Jer. xxxi. 19.] [Ps. lxxiii. 22.]

missurus, nec vino, quod infusurus erat, pollueretur.—Busbeq. Epist., i. p. 11.]

[p] [ἀλλὰ πελέκεις γὰρ ἀμφιστόμους

mortal at the entrance, do all their slaughter by the hardness of getting out,—the vultures that so tire and gnaw upon the soul, the *συνοχοὶ* that never suffer the sinner fool to make any approach toward his wits, toward sobriety again: this passionate love of folly improved into an habitual, steady course of atheisticalness, a deliberate, peremptory, final reprobating of heaven,—the purity at once, and the bliss of it,—the stanch, demure covenanting with death, and resolvedness to have their part, to run their fortune with Satan, through all adventures; this is that monstrous brat, that—as for the birth of the champion in the poet—three nights of darkness, more than Egyptian, were to be crowded into one—all the simplicity and folly in a kingdom—to help to a being in the world. And at the birth of it you will pardon Wisdom if she break out into a passion and exclamation of pity first, and then of indignation, "How long, ye simple ones?" &c.; my last particular.

The first debt that wisdom, that Christ, that every Christian brother owes and pays to every unchristian liver, is that of pity and compassion; which is to him of all others the properest dole. Look upon all the sad, moanful objects in the world, betwixt whom all our compassion is wont to be divided; first, the bankrupt rotting in a gaol; secondly, the direful, bloody spectacle of the soldier, wounded by the sword of war; thirdly, the malefactor howling under the stone, or gasping upon the rack or wheel; and fourthly, the gallant person on the scaffold or gallows ready for execution; and the secure, senseless sinner is the brachygraphy of all these.

You have in him, 1. a rich patrimony and treasure of grace—purchased dear, and settled on him by Christ—most prodigally and contumeliously misspent and exhausted; 2. a soul streaming out whole rivers of blood and spirits through every wound, even every sin it hath been guilty of, and not enduring the water to cleanse, much less the wine or oil to be poured into any one of them; the whole soul transfigured into one wound, one *θρόμβος αἵματος*, "congelation and clod of blood:" then thirdly, beyond this, all the racks and

[Luke xxii. 44.]

καὶ τοὺς ἄγγωνας, οἷς δὴ καὶ τὰ πλεῖστα κατεργάζονται, κ.τ. λ.—Agathias, Hist., lib. ii. p. 40. apud Corp. Hist. Byz. Paris. 1660.]

pangs of a tormenting conscience, his only present exercise; and lastly, all the torments in hell—the officer ready hurrying him to the judge, and the judge delivering him to the executioner—his minutely dread and expectation, the dream that so haunts and hounds him. And what would a man give in bowels of compassion (to Christianity? or but) to human kind, to be able to reprieve or rescue such an unhappy creature; to be but the Lazarus with one drop of water to cool the tip of the scalding tongue, that is engaged in such a pile of flames? If there be any charity left in this frozen world, any beam under this cold uninhabitable zone, it will certainly work some meltings on the most obdurate heart; it will dissolve and pour out our bowels into a seasonable advice or admonition,—that excellent recipe, saith Themistius[q], *Ἀντὶ καύσεων καὶ τομῶν*, "that supplies the place and does the work of the burnings and scarifyings,"—a cry to stop him in his precipitous course; a tear at least to solemnize, if not to prevent so sad a fate. And it were well if all our bowels were thus employed, all our kindness and most passionate love, thus converted and laid out on our poor lapsed sinner-brethren's souls, to seize upon those fugitives, as Christ is said to do, *ἐπιλαμβάνεσθαι*, to catch hold and bring them back, ere it be yet too late; rescue them out of the hands of their dearest espoused sins, and not suffer the most flattering kind of death,—*κακοτεχνία ὑποδύουσα ὀνόματι σεμνῷ* in Gal. de Athl.[r], "the devil in the angelical disguise,"—the sin that undertakes to be the prime saint,—the zeal for the Lord of Hosts,—any the most venerable impiety, to lay hold on them. Could I but see such a new-fashioned charity received and entertained in the world: every man to become his brother's keeper, and every man so tame as to love and interpret aright, entertain and embrace this keeper, this *ἐπίτροπος δαίμων*, this guardian angel, as an angel indeed, as the only valuable friend he hath under heaven, I should think this a lucky omen of the world's returning to its wits, to some degree of piety again. And till then there is a very

[Mat. v. 25.]

[Heb. ii. 16.]

[q] [*Ἔχεις δὲ καὶ σὺ φαρμάκοις ἀντὶ καύσεων καὶ τομῶν εἰς τὴν ἰατρείαν κεχρῆσθαι. τὰ δὲ φάρμακα ταῦτα λόγοι εἰσὶ μεστοὶ εὐνοίας καὶ παρρησίας, οὐχ οἱ γλυκεῖς καὶ πρὸς χάριν, κ.τ.λ.*—Themistius, Orat. xxii. *περὶ φιλιᾶς*, p. 335. ed. Dindorf.]

[r] Solon.

fit place and season for the exercise of the other part of the passion here, that of indignation, the last minute of my last particular, as the "how long" is an expression of indignation.

Indignation, not at the men,—for however Aristotle's[s] δεῖ νεμεσᾶν, "a man ought to have indignation at some persons," may seem to justify it, our Saviour calls not for any [Phil. ii. 1.] such stern passion, or indeed any but love, and bowels of pity, and charity toward the person of any the most enor- [Gal. vi. 1.] mous sinner; and St. Paul, only for the καταρτίζετε, the "restoring," setting him in joint again, that is thus "overtaken in any fault,"—but indignation, I say, at the sin, at the simplicity and the folly, that refuse reproachful creature, that hath the fate to be beloved so passionately and so long. And to this will Aristotle's season of indignation belong, the seeing favours and kindness so unworthily dispensed,—the upstarts, saith he, and new men advanced and gotten into the greatest dignities,—knowledge to be professedly hated, and under that title, all the prime, i. e. practical wisdom, and piety, and simplicity, i. e. folly, and madness, and sin, to have our whole souls laid out upon it.

O let this shrill sarcasm of Wisdom's, the "How long, ye simple ones," be for ever a sounding in our ears. Let this indignation at our stupid ways of sin transplant itself to that soil where it is likely to thrive and fructify best, I mean, to that of our own instead of other men's breasts, where it will appear gloriously in St. Paul's inventory, a prime part of [2 Cor. vii. 10.] that ἀμεταμέλητος μετάνοια, the durable, unretracted repentance, an effect of that godly sorrow that worketh to salvation. And if it be sincere, O what indignation it produceth in us! what displeasure and rage at our folly! to think how senselessly we have moulted and crumbled away our souls! what unthrifty bargains we have made! what sots and fools we shall appear to hell, when it shall be known to the wretched, tormented creatures what ambitions we had to be but as miserable as they! upon what Gotham errands, what wild-goose chases we are come posting and wearied thither! O that a little of this consideration and this passion betimes, might ease us of that endless woe and indignation; those

[s] [Arist. Rhet. ii. 9.]

tears and gnashing of teeth quit us of that sad arrear of horrors that otherwise waits behind for us. Lord, do Thou give us that view of our ways; the errors, the follies, the furies of our extravagant, atheistical lives; that may, by the very reproach and shame, recover and return us to Thee! "Make our faces ashamed, O Lord, that we may seek Thy Law;" give us that pity and that indignation to our poor, perishing souls, that may at length awake and fright us out of our lethargies, and bring us so many confounded, humbled, contrite penitentiaries, to that beautiful gate of Thy temple of mercies, where we may retract our follies, implore Thy pardon, deprecate Thy wrath; and for Thy deliverance from so deep a hell, from so infamous a vile condition, from so numerous a tale of deaths, never leave praising Thee, and saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory; glory be to Thee, O God, most high."

[Ps.lxxxiii. 16.]

To whom, with the Son and the Holy Ghost be ascribed, &c.

SERMON XVI.

Matt. i. 23.

Emmanuel, which is by interpretation, God with us.

The different measure and means of dispensing divine knowledge to several ages of the world, may sufficiently appear by the gospels of the New, and prophecies of the Old Testament; the sunshine and the clearness of the one, and the twilight and dimness of the other: but in no point this more importantly concerns us than the incarnation of Christ. This hath been the study and theme, the speculation and sermon of all holy men and writers since Adam's fall; yet
Mat. iii. 3. never plainly disclosed till John Baptist, in the third of Matthew and the third verse, and the angel in the next verses before my text, undertook the task, and then indeed was it fully performed; then were the writings, or rather the riddles, of the obscure, stammering, whispering prophets,
Isa. xl. 3. turned into the voice of "one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the ways of the Lord," &c. Then did the cry, yea, shouting of the Baptist, at once both interpret and perform
ver. 4. what it prophesied; at the sound of it, "every valley was exalted, and every hill was brought low: the crooked was made straight, and the rough places plain," that is, the hill and groves of the prophets were levelled into the open champaign of the gospel; those impediments which hindered God's approach unto men's rebel hearts were carefully removed; the abject mind was lifted up, the exalted was depressed, the intractable and rough was rendered plain and even; in the same manner as a way was made unto the Roman army marching against Jerusalem.

This I thought profitable to be premised to you, both that you might understand the affinity of prophecies and gospel, as differing not in substance, but only in clearness of revelation, as the glorious face of the sun from itself being overcast and masked with a cloud; and also for the clearing of my text. For this entire passage of Scripture, of which these words are a close, is the angel's message or gospel unto Joseph, and set down by St. Matthew, as both the interpretation and accomplishment of a prophecy delivered long ago by Isaiah, but perhaps not at all understood by the Jews: to wit, "that a virgin should conceive and bear a son, and they should call His name Emmanuel."

Where first we must examine the seeming difference in the point of Christ's name, betwixt the place here cited from Isaiah, and the words here vouched of the angel, and proved by the effect. For the prophet says, "He shall be called Emmanuel," but the angel commands He should be, and the Gospel records He was named Jesus. Mat. i. 21. ver. 25. Isa. vii. 14.

And here we must resume and enlarge the ground premised in our preface, that prophecies being not histories, but rude imperfect draughts of things to come, do not exactly express and delineate, but only shadow and covertly veil those things which only the Spirit of God and the event must interpret. So that in the Gospel we construe the words, but in prophecies the sense; i. e. we expect not the performance of every circumstance expressed in the words of a prophecy, but we acknowledge another sense beyond the literal; and in the comparing of Isaiah with St. Matthew we exact not the same expressions, provided we find the same substance and the same significancy. So then the prophet's, "and call His name Emmanuel," is not, as human covenants are, to be fulfilled in the rigour of the letter, that He should be so named at His circumcision, but in the agreement of sense, that this name should express His nature; that He was indeed "God with us," and that at the circumcision He should receive a name of the same power and significancy. Whence the observation by the way is, that Emmanuel in effect signifies "Jesus," "God with us," "a Saviour;" and from thence the point of doctrine, that God's coming to us, i. e. Christ's incarnation, brought salvation into the world. For

if there be a substantial agreement betwixt the prophet and the angel; if Emmanuel signify directly "Jesus;" if "God with us," and "a Saviour," be really the same title of Christ; then was there no Saviour, and consequently no salvation, before this presence of God with us. Which position we will briefly explain, and then, omitting unnecessary proofs, apply it.

In explaining of it we must calculate the time of Christ's incarnation, and set down how with it, and not before, came salvation.

We may collect in Scripture a threefold incarnation of Christ; 1. in the counsel of God, 2. in the promises of God, 3. in a personal open exhibiting of Him unto the world; the effect and complement of both counsel and promises.

Rev. xiii. 8. 1. In the counsel of God; so He was as "slain," so incarnate, "before the foundation of the world." For the word slain, being not competible to the eternal God, but only to the assumption of the human nature, presupposes Him incarnate, because slain. God then in His prescience, surveying before He created, and viewing the lapsed, miserable, sick estate of the future creation, in His eternal decree foresaw and pre-ordained Jesus, the Saviour, the "author and finisher of" the world's salvation. So that in the counsel of God, to whom all things to come are made present, Emmanuel and Jesus went together; and no salvation bestowed on us, but in respect to this, "God with us."

[Heb. xii. 2.]

2. In the promises of God; and then Christ was incarnate when He was promised first in paradise, "The seed of the woman," &c., and so He is as old in the flesh as the world in sin, and was then in God's promise first born when Adam and mankind began to die. Afterwards He was, not again, but still incarnate in God's promise more evidently in Abraham's time, "In thy seed," &c., and in Moses's time when at the addition of the passover, a most significant representation of the incarnate and crucified Christ, He was more than promised, almost exhibited. Under which times it is by some asserted that Christ, in the form of man, and habit of angel, appeared sundry times to the fathers[a], to give them not a hope, but a possession of the incarnate God, and to be *præludium incarnationis*, a pawn unto them that they

Gen. iii. 15.

Gen. xii. 3; xviii. 18; xxii. 18; Exod. xiii.

[a] [Vid. Bulli Def. Fid. Nic., I. 1, 2, sqq.]

trusted not in vain. And here it is plain throughout, that this incarnation of Christ, in the promise of God, did perpetually accompany or go before salvation: not one blessing on the nations, without mention of "thy seed;" not one encouragement against fear, or unto confidence, but confirmed and backed with an "I am thy shield," &c., i. e. according to the Targum, "My Word is thy shield;" i. e. my Christ, who is ὁ λόγος, "the Word;" not any mention of righteousness and salvation but on ground and condition of belief of that Jesus which was then in promise, "Emmanuel, God with us." [Gen. xv. 1.] [John i. 1.]

3. In the personal exhibiting of Christ in form of flesh unto the world, dated at the fulness of time, and called in our ordinary phrase His incarnation; then no doubt was Emmanuel, Jesus; then was He openly shewed to all people in the form of God a Saviour, which Simeon most divinely styles "God's salvation," thereby, no doubt, meaning the incarnate Christ, which by being "God with us," was salvation. Luke ii. 30.

Thus do you see a threefold incarnation, a threefold Emmanuel, and proportionably a threefold Jesus.

1. A Saviour first decreed for the world, answerable to God, incarnate in God's counsel; and so no man was ever capable of salvation but through "God with us."

2. A Saviour promised to the world, answerable to the second "God with us," to wit, incarnate in the promise; and so there is no covenant of salvation but in this "God with us."

3. A Saviour truly exhibited and born of a woman, answerable to the third Emmanuel; and so also is there no manifestation, no proclaiming, no preaching of salvation, but by the birth and merits of "God with us."

To these three, if we add a fourth incarnation of Christ, the assuming of our immortal flesh, which was at His resurrection, then surely the doctrine will be complete, and this Emmanuel incarnate in the womb of the grave, and brought forth clothed upon with an incorruptible seed, is now more fully than ever proved an eternal Jesus; for "when He had overcome the sharpness of death, He opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers," as it is in our *Te Deum;* as if all that till then ever entered into heaven had been admitted by some

privy key; but now the very gates were wide opened to all believers. This last incarnation of Christ, being accompanied with a catholic salvation, that Jesus might be as eternal as Emmanuel, that He might be as immortal a Saviour as a God with us. It were but a superfluous work further to demonstrate that through all ages of the world there was no salvation ever tendered but in respect to this incarnation of Christ; that the hopes, the belief, the expectation of salvation, which the fathers lived and breathed by, under the types of the law, was only grounded upon, and referred unto, these promises of the future incarnation; that they which were not in some measure enlightened in this mystery were not also partakers of this covenant of salvation; that all the means besides that heaven and earth, and which goes beyond them both, the brain of man or angel, could afford or invent, could not excuse, much less save any child of Adam; that every soul which was to spring from these loins had been without those transcendent mercies which were exhibited by this incarnation of Christ's, plunged in necessary desperate damnation; your patience shall be more profitably employed in a brief application of the point;

First, that you persuade and drive yourselves to a sense and feeling of your sins, those sins which thus plucked God out of heaven, and for a while deprived Him of His majesty; which laid an engagement upon God, either to leave His infinite justice unsatisfied, or else to subject His infinite deity to the servile mortality of flesh, or else to leave an infinite world in a common damnation.

Secondly, to strain all the expressions of our hearts, tongues, and lives, to the highest note of gratitude which is possible, in answer to this mystery and treasure of this "God with us;" to reckon all the miracles of either common or private preservations, as foils to this incomparable mercy, infinitely below the least circumstance of it; without which thine estate, thy understanding, thy body, thy soul, thy being, thy very creation, were each of them as exquisite curses as hell or malice could invent for thee.

Thirdly, to observe with an ecstasy of joy and thanks the precious privileges of us Christians, beyond all that ever God professed love to, in that we have obtained a full revel-

ation of this "God with us;" which all the fathers did but see in a cloud, the angels peeped at, the heathen world gaped after, but we behold as in a plain at mid-day: for since the veil of the temple was rent, every man that hath eyes may see *sanctum sanctorum*, the holy of holies, "God with us." Mat. xxvii. 51.

Fourthly, to make a real use of this doctrine to the profit of our souls, that if God have designed to be Emmanuel, and Jesus an incarnate God, and Saviour to us; that then we will fit, and prepare, and make ourselves capable of this mercy; and by the help of our religious, devout, humble endeavours, not frustrate, but further and promote in ourselves this end of Christ's incarnation, the saving of our souls; and this use is effectually made to our hands in the twelfth to the Hebrews, at the last, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved;" i. e. being partakers of the presence, the reign, the salvation of the incarnate God, "let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear." And do Thou, O powerful God, improve the truth of this doctrine to the best advantage of our souls, that Thy Son may not be born to us unprofitably; but that He may be God, not only with us, but in us; in us, to sanctify and adorn us here with His effectual grace; and with us, to sustain us here, as our Emmanuel; and as our Jesus, to crown and perfect us hereafter with glory. Heb. xii. ult.

And so much for this point, that Jesus and Emmanuel import the same thing, and there was no salvation till this presence of "God with us." We now come to the substance itself, i. e. Christ's incarnation, noted by "Emmanuel, which is by interpretation," &c. Where first we must explain the word, then drive forward to the matter. The word in Isaiah, in the Hebrew, is not so much a name as a sentence describing unto us the mystery of the conception of the Virgin, עמנו אל, "with us God;" where אל or אלה, "God," is taken in Scripture, either absolutely for the nature of God, as for the most part in the Old Testament, or personally; and so either for the person of the Father in many places, or else distinctly for the person of the Son. "And will save them by the Lord their God," אלהיהם, their God, i. e. Hos. i. 7.

Christ: and so also most evidently in this place, out of Isaiah, where אל signifies the "Son incarnate, God-man," *θεάνθρωπος*, and many the like; especially those where the Targum paraphrases Jehovah, or Jehovah Elohim, by מימרא דיי אלהים,
John i. 1. "the Word of the Lord," i. e. Christ Jesus. As for in-
Gen. iii. 22. Gen. ii. 6. stance, "that Word of the Lord said;" and "the Word created." Secondly, עם, which signifies in its extent "near," "at," "with," or "amongst." Thirdly, the particle signifying "us," though it expresses not, yet it must note, our human nature, our abode, our being in this our great world, wherein we travel, and this our little world, wherein we dwell; not as a mansion place, to remain in, but either as an inn to lodge, or a tabernacle to be covered, or a prison to suffer in. So that the words in their latitude run thus; Emmanuel; i. e. the second Person in Trinity is come down into this lower world amongst us, for a while to travel, to lodge, to sojourn, to be fettered in this inn, this tabernacle, this prison of man's flesh; or briefly, at this time, is conceived and born God-man, *θεάνθρωπος*, the same both God and man, the man Christ Jesus. And this is the cause and business, the ground and theme of our present rejoicing: in this were limited and fulfilled the expectation of the fathers, and in this begins and is accomplished the hope and joy of
Luke ii. 28. us Christians; that which was old Simeon's warning to death, the sight and embraces of the Lord's Christ, as the greatest happiness which an especial favour could bestow on him; and therefore made him in a contempt of any further life, sing his own funeral, *Nunc dimittis*, "Lord, now lettest Thou," &c. This is to us the prologue, and first part of a Christian's life; either the life of the world, that that may be worthy to be called life; or that of grace, that we be not dead whilst we live. For were it not for this assumption of flesh, you may justly curse that ever you carried flesh about you; that ever your soul was committed to such a prison as your body is; nay, such a dungeon, such a grave: but through this incarnation of Christ, our flesh is or shall be cleansed into a temple for the soul to worship in, and in heaven for a robe for it to triumph in. For our body shall be purified by His body.

If ye will be sufficiently instructed into a just valuation of

the weight of this mystery, you must resolve yourselves to a pretty large task,—and it were a notable Christmas employment, I should bless God for any one that would be so piously valiant as to undertake it,—you must read over the whole book of Scripture and nature to this purpose. For when you find in the Psalmist the news of Christ's coming, Ps. xl. 7.
"Then said I, lo I come;" you find your directions how to track Him, "In the volume of the book it is written of Me," &c., i. e. either in the whole book, or in every folding, every leaf of this book,—thou shalt not find a story, a riddle, a prophecy, a ceremony, a downright legal constitution, but hath some manner of aspect on this glass, some way drives at this mystery, "God manifest in flesh." For example,—perhaps you have not noted,—wherever you read Seth's genealogies more insisted on than Cain's, Shem's than his elder brother Ham's, Abraham's than the whole world besides, [Gen. v., xi.; 1 Chron. i., ii., &c.]
Jacob's than Esau's, Judah's than the whole twelve patriarchs; and the like passages which directly drive down the line of Christ, and make that the whole business of the Scripture; whensoever, I say, you read any of these, then are you to note that Shiloh was to come; that He which was sent was on His journey; that from the creation till the fulness of time the Scripture was in travail with Him; and by His leaping ever now and then, and as it were, springing in the womb, gave manifest tokens that it had conceived, and would at last bring forth the Messias. So that the whole Old Testament is a mystical Virgin Mary, a kind of mother of Christ; which by the Holy Ghost conceived Him in Genesis; Gen. iii. 15.
and throughout Moses and the prophets carried Him in the womb, and was very big of Him; and at last in Malachi was Mal. iii. 4.
in a manner delivered of Him. For there you shall find mention of John Baptist, who was, as it were, the midwife of the Old Testament, to open its womb, and bring the Messias into the world. Howsoever, at the least it is plain, that the Old Testament brought Him to His birth, though it had not strength to bring forth; and the prophets, as Moses from Mount Nebo, came to a view of this land of Canaan. [Deut. xxxiv. 1.]

For the very first words of the New Testament being, as it were, to fill up what only was wanting in the Old, are the book and history of His generations and birth. You would Mat. i. 1.

yet be better able to prize the excellency of this work, and reach the pitch of this day's rejoicing, if you would learn how the very heathen fluttered about this light; what shift they made to get some inkling of this incarnation beforehand; how the sibyls, heathen women, and Virgil[b], and other heathen poets in their writings, before Christ's time, let fall many passages, which plainly referred and belonged to this incarnation of God. It is fine sport to see in our authors, how the devil, with his famous oracles and prophets, foreseeing by his skill in the Scripture, that Christ was near His birth, did droop upon it, and hang the wing; did sensibly decay in his courage, began to breathe thick, and speak imperfectly; and sometimes as men in the extremity of a fever, distractedly, wildly, without any coherence, and scarce sense; and how at last about the birth of Christ, he plainly gave up the ghost, and left his oracular prophets as speechless as the caves they dwelt in, their last voice being, that their great god Pan[c], i. e. the devil, was dead, and so both his kingdom and their prophecies at an end; as if Christ's coming had chased Lucifer out of the world, and the powers of hell were buried that minute when a Saviour was born.

And now by way of use, can ye see the devil put out of heart, and ye not put forward to get the field? can you delay to make use of such an advantage as this? can ye be so cruel to yourselves as to shew any mercy on that now disarmed enemy? will ye see God send His Son down into the field to enter the lists, and lead up a forlorn troop against the prince of this world, and ye not follow at His alarm? will ye not accept of a conquest which Christ so lovingly offers you? It is a most terrible exprobration in Hosea, look on it, where God objects to Ephraim her not taking notice of His mercies; her not seconding and making use of His loving deliverances, which plainly adumbrates this deliverance by Christ's death; as may appear by the first verse of the chapter, compared with Matthew xv. 2. "Well," saith God, "I taught Ephraim to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that I healed them. I drew them with

Hos. xi. 3.

[b] [Vid. Oracula Sibyllina, et Virg. Bucol. iv.]

[c] [Cf. Plutarch. de Oraculorum Defectu. Op., tom. vii. p. 651. ed. Reiske.]

the cords of a man;" an admirable phrase,—with all those means that use to oblige one man to another,—"with bands of love," &c., i. e. I used all means for the sustaining and strengthening of My people: I put them in a course to be able to go, and fight, and overcome all the powers of darkness, and put off the devil's yoke: I sent My Son amongst them for this purpose. And all this I did by way of love, as one friend is wont to do for another, and yet they would not take notice of either the benefit or the donor, nor think themselves beholden to Me for this mercy. Mat. xv. 1.

And this is our case, beloved, if we do not second these and the like mercies of God bestowed on us; if we do not improve them to our souls' health; if we do not fasten on this Christ incarnate; if we do not follow Him with an expression of gratitude and reverence, and stick close to Him as both our friend and captain. Finally, if we do not endeavour and pray that this His incarnation may be seconded with another; that as once He was born in our flesh to justify us, so He may be also born spiritually in our souls to sanctify us: for there is a spiritual *ἐνσάρκωσις*, or mystical incarnation of Christ in every regenerate man, where the soul of man is the womb wherein Christ is conceived by the Holy Ghost. The proof of which doctrine shall entertain the remainder of this hour: for this is the Emmanuel that most nearly concerns us, "God with us," i. e. with our spirits, or Christ begotten and brought forth in our hearts. Of which briefly.

And that Christ is thus born in a regenerate man's soul, if it were denied, might directly appear by these two places of Scripture, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Again, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith," &c. Gal. ii. 20. Eph. iii. 17.

Now that you may understand this spiritual incarnation of Christ the better, we will compare it with His real incarnation in the womb of the Virgin; that so we may keep close to the business of the day, and at once observe both His birth to the world and ours to grace; and so even possess Christ whilst we speak of Him.

And first, if we look on His mother Mary we shall find her

Mat. i. 18. an entire pure Virgin, only espoused to Joseph; "but before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost," and then the soul of man must be this Virgin.

Now there is a threefold purity or virginity of the soul; first, an absolute one, such as was found in Adam before his fall; secondly, a respective, of a soul, which like Mary, hath not yet joined or committed with the world, to whom it is espoused; which though it have its part of natural corruptions, yet either for want of ability, of age, or occasion, hath not yet broke forth into the common outrages of sin; thirdly, a restored purity of a soul formerly polluted, but now cleansed by repentance.

The former kind of natural and absolute purity, as it were to be wished for, so is it not to be hoped; and therefore is not to be imagined in the Virgin mother, or expected in the virgin soul. The second purity we find in all regenerate infants, who are at the same time outwardly initiated to the Church and inwardly to Christ; or in those whom God hath called before they have engaged themselves in the courses of actual, heinous sins; such are well disposed, well brought up, [Mark xii. 34.] and to use our Saviour's words, have so lived as "not to be Acts x. 1. far from the kingdom of God;" such haply, as Cornelius; and such a soul as this is the fittest womb in which our Saviour delights to be incarnate; where He may enter and dwell without either resistance or annoyance, where He shall be received at the first knock, and never be disordered or repulsed by any stench of the carcase, or violence of the body of sin. The re- Ps. li. 10. stored purity is a right spirit renewed in the soul, a wound cured up by repentance, and differs only from the former purity as a scar from a skin never cut, wanting somewhat of the beauty and outward clearness, but nothing of either the strength or health of it. *Optandum esset ut in simplici virginitate servaretur navis*[d], *&c.*; "it were to be wished that the ship, our souls, could be kept in its simple virginity, and never be in danger of either leak or shipwreck." But this perpetual integrity, being a desperate, impossible wish, there is one only remedy, which though it cannot prevent a leak, can stop it.

[d] Tertull. [de Pœnit., c. 4. p. 146. see Practical Catechism, p. 129. The metaphor of the "*tabula post naufragium*," occurs in that passage, but the words quoted here by Hammond are from S. Ambrose ad Virg. Laps.]

And this is repentance after sin committed, *post naufragium tabula*, a means to secure one after a shipwreck, and to deliver him even in the deep waters. And this we call a restored virginity of the soul, which Christ also vouchsafes to be conceived and born in. The first degree of innocence being not to have sinned, the second to have repented.

In the second place, the mother of Christ in the flesh was a Virgin, not only till the time of Christ's conception, but also till the time of His birth, "He knew her not till she had brought forth," &c. And further, as we may probably believe, remained a Virgin all the days of her life after; for to her is applied by the learned that which is typically spoken of the east gate of the sanctuary, "This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it, because the Lord the God of Israel hath entered in by it; therefore it shall be shut." A place, if appliable, very apposite for the expression. Hence is she called by the fathers and councils ἀειπαρθένος, a "perpetual Virgin," against the heresy of Helvidius[e]. The probability of this might be further proved if it were needful. And ought not upon all principles of nature and of justice, the virgin soul, after Christ once conceived in it, remain pure and stanch till Christ be born in it, nay, be ἀειπαρθένος, a "perpetual Virgin," never indulge to sensual pleasures, or cast away that purity which Christ either found or wrought in it? If it were a respective purity, then ought it not perpetually retain and increase it, and never fall off to those disorders that other men supinely live in? If it were a recovered purity, hold it fast, and never turn again, "as a dog to his vomit, or a sow to her wallowing in the mire?" For this conception and birth of Christ in the soul would not only wash away the filth that the swine was formerly mired in, but also take away the swinish nature, that she shall never have any strong propension to return again to her former inordinate delights. Now this continuance of the soul in this its recovered virginity, is not from the firm, constant, stable nature of the soul, but as Eusebius[f] saith in another case, ἀπὸ μείζονος καὶ κρατεροῦ δεσμοῦ,

Mat. i. 25.

Ezek. xliv. 2.

[2 Pet. ii. ult.]

[e] [Cf. S. Hieron. Tract. adv. Helvidium; Op., tom. ii.]

[f] Euseb. Præp. Evang., lib. xiii. p. 412. [His words (quoted from Plato, Timæus, p. 41,) are μείζονος ἔτι δεσμοῦ καὶ κυριωτέρου λαχόντες.]

"from a more strong, able band," the union of Christ to the soul, His spiritual incarnation in it: "Because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it; therefore it shall be shut," i. e. it shall not be opened either in consent or practice to the lusts and pollutions of the world or flesh; because Christ, by being born in it, hath cleansed it; because He the Word of God, said the word, therefore the leprosy is cured; in whom He enters He dwells, and on whom He makes His real impression "He seals them up to the day of redemption;" unless we unbuild ourselves and change our shape we must be His.

Ezek. xiv. 2.

[Eph. iv. 30.]

In the third place, if we look on the agent in this conception, we shall find it, both in Mary and in the soul of man, to be the Holy Ghost, that which is conceived in either of them "is of the Holy Ghost;" nothing in this business of Christ's birth with us to be imputed to natural power or causes, the whole contrivance and final production of it, the preparations to and labouring of it, is all the workmanship of the Spirit. So that as Mary was called by an ancient, so may the soul without an hyperbole by us be styled, "the shop of miracles," and "the workhouse of the Holy Ghost[g];" in which every operation is a miracle to nature, and no tools are used but what the Spirit forged and moves. Mary conceived Christ, but it was above her own reach to apprehend the manner how; for so she questions the angel, "How shall this be?" &c. So doth this soul of man conceive and grow big, and bring forth Christ, and yet not itself fully perceives how this work is wrought; Christ being, for the most part, insensibly begotten in us, and to be discerned only spiritually, not at His entrance, but in His fruits.

Mat. i. 20.

Luke i. 34.

In the fourth place, that Mary was chosen and appointed among all the families of the earth to be the mother of the Christ, was no manner of desert of hers, but God's special favour and dignation; whence the words run truly interpreted, "Hail, thou that art highly favoured;" not as the vulgar read, *gratia plena*, "full of grace." And again, "Thou hast found favour with God." So is it in the case of man's soul; there is no power of nature, no preparation of morality, no art that all the philosophy or learning in the world can

Luke i. 28. κεχαριτωμένη.

Ver. 30, εὗρες χάριν.

[g] [See above, p. 311.]

teach a man, which can deserve this grace at Christ's hands, that can any way woo or allure God to be born spiritually in us, which can persuade or entice the Holy Ghost to conceive and beget Christ in us, but only the mere favour and good pleasure of God, which may be obtained by our prayers, but can never be challenged by our merits, may be comfortably expected and hoped for as a largess given to our necessities and wants, but can never be required as a reward of our deserts. For it was no high pitch of perfection which Mary observed in herself as the motive to this favour; but only the mere mercy of God, which "regarded the lowliness of His handmaid." Luke i. 48.

Whence in the fifth place, this soul in which Christ will vouchsafe to be born must be a lowly, humble soul; or else it will not perfectly answer Mary's temper, nor fully bear a part in her *Magnificat;* where in the midst of her glory she humbly specifies the "lowliness of His handmaid." But this by the way.

In the sixth place, if we consider here with John the Baptist, His forerunner, coming to prepare His way, and his preaching repentance as a necessary requisite to Christ's being born and received in the world; then we shall drive the matter to a further issue, and find repentance a necessary preparation for the birth of Christ in our hearts. For so the Baptist's message, "Prepare the ways," &c., is here interpreted by the event, "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand;" as if this harbinger had no other furniture and provision to bespeak in the heart that was to receive Christ, but only repentance for sins. I will not examine here the precedence of repentance before faith in Christ, though I might seasonably here state the question, and direct you to begin with John and proceed to Christ; first repent, then fasten on Christ; only this for all, the promises of salvation in Christ are promised on condition of repentance and amendment, they must be weary and heavy laden, who ever come to Christ, and expect rest. And therefore whosoever applies these benefits to himself, and thereby conceives Christ in his heart, must first resolve to undertake the condition required, to wit, "newness of life," which yet he will not be able to perform till Christ be fully born and dwell in Him by Isa. xl. 3. Mat. iii. 2. Mat. xi. 28.

His enabling graces; for you may mark, that Christ and John being both about the same age, as appears by the story, Christ must needs be born before John's preaching: so in the soul there is supposed some kind of incarnation of Christ, before repentance or newness of life; yet before Christ is born, or at least come to His full stature and perfect growth in us; this Baptist's sermon, that is, this repentance and resolution to amendment, must be presumed in our souls. And so repentance is both a preparation to Christ's birth, and
Mat. iii. 2. an effect of it. For so John preached, "Repent, for," &c.
Mat. iv. 17. And so also in the same words Christ preaches, "Repent," &c. And so these two together, John and Christ, repentance and faith, though one began before the other was perfected; yet,
Mat. iii. 15. I say, these two together in the fully regenerate man "fulfil all righteousness."

In the seventh place you may observe, that when Christ was born in Bethlehem, the whole land was in an uproar.
Mat. ii. 3. Herod the king "was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him;" which whether we apply to the lesser city, the soul of man, in which, or the adjoining people, amongst whom Christ is spiritually born in any man, you shall for the most acknowledge the agreement: for the man himself, if he have been any inordinate sinner, then at the birth of Christ in him, all his natural, sinful faculties are much displeased, his reigning Herod sins, and all the Jerusalem of habituate lusts and passions are in great disorder, as knowing that this new birth bodes their instant destruction; and then they cry oft in
Mark i. 24. the voice of the devil, "What have we to do with Thee,
[Matt. viii. 29.] Jesus, Thou Son of God? Art Thou come to torment and dispossess us before our time?" If it be applied to the neighbour worldlings which hear of this new convert, then are they also in an uproar, and consult how they shall deal with
Wisd. ii. [14.] this turbulent spirit, "which is made to upbraid our ways and reprove our thoughts," which is like to bring down
Acts xix. 24. all their trading and cozenage to a low ebb, like Diana's silversmith in the Acts, which made a solemn speech—and the text says there was a great stir—against Paul, because the attempt of his upstart doctrine was like to undo
[ver. 25.] the shrine-makers: "Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth." And no marvel that in both these

respects there is a great uproar, seeing the spiritual birth of Christ is most infinitely opposite to both the common people of the world and common affections of the soul, two of the most turbulent, tumultuous, wayward, violent nations upon earth.

In the eighth and last place,—because I will not tire you above the time which is allotted for the trial of your patience, —you may observe the increase and growth of Christ, and that either in Himself, "in wisdom and stature," &c., or else Luke ii. 52. in His troop and attendants, and that either of "angels to Mat. iv. 11. minister unto Him," or of disciples to follow and obey Him; and then the harmony will still go current. Christ in the regenerat eman is first conceived, then born, then by degrees of childhood and youth grows at last to the "measure of [Eph. iv. the stature of this fulness," and the soul consequently from 13.] strength to strength, from virtue to virtue, is increased "to a perfect manhood in Christ Jesus." Then also where Christ is thus born He chooses and calls a jury at least of disciple-graces, to judge and sit upon thee, to give in evidence unto thy spirit, "that thou art the son of God." Then is he also [Rom. viii. ministered unto, and furnished by the angels with a perpetual 16.] supply, either to increase the lively, or to recover decayed graces. So that now Christ doth bestow a new life upon the man, and the regenerate soul becomes the daughter, as well as the mother of Christ; she conceives Christ, and Christ her; she lives, and grows, and moves in Christ, and Christ in her. So that at last she comes to that pitch and height and ἀκμὴ, that St. Paul speaks of, "I live, yet not I, but Christ Gal. ii. 20. liveth in me; and the life which I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

And do Thou, O Holy Jesus, which hast loved us and given Thyself for us, love us still, and give Thyself to us. Thou which hast been born in the world to save sinners, vouchsafe again to be again incarnate in our souls, to regenerate and sanctify sinners. Thou which art the theme of our present rejoicing, become our author of perpetual, bring forth, spiritual rejoicing; that our souls may conceive and and Thou mayest conceive and regenerate our souls; that we may dwell in Christ, and Christ in us: and from the

meditation of Thy mortal flesh here, we may be partakers with Thee of Thine immortal glory hereafter.

Thus have we briefly passed through these words, and in them first shewed you the real agreement betwixt Matthew and Isaiah, in the point of Christ's name, and from thence noted that Jesus and Emmanuel is in effect all one; and that Christ's incarnation brought salvation into the world. Which being proved through Christ's several incarnations were applied to our direction: 1. to humble ourselves; 2. to express our thankfulness; 3. to observe our privileges; 4. to make ourselves capable and worthy receivers of this mercy. Then we came to the incarnation itself, where we shewed you the excellency of this mystery by the effects which the expectation and foresight of it wrought in the fathers, the prophets, the heathens, the devils: and then by way of use, what an horrible sin it was not to apply and employ this mercy to our souls. Lastly, we came to another birth of Christ, besides that in the flesh, His spiritual incarnation in man's soul; which we compared with the former exactly in eight chief circumstances; and so left all to God's Spirit and your meditations to work on.

Now the God, &c.

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